END THE TYRANNY
How to liberate yourself from your kids
P. 12

GPS PANTIES

P.41

SEND HIM PACKING, TOO
Ralph Goodale should do the right thing. Resign. P. 4

Why you should yell at your doctor
P. 58

MACLEAN'S

JAN. 9th 2006

www.maclean.ca

EXCLUSIVE

THE SPIELBERG MASSACRE

'I wrote a book on terrorism at Munich. It was all about avenging evil. Then the King of Hollywood got hold of it.'

By George Jonas P.44

$4.95

PM 40070230 R 08973

MARK STEYN'S NEW COLUMN P. 54



HYBRID SYNERGY DRIVE

Ready to Go.

Toyota presents Hybrid Synergy Drive.* Blending driving pleasure with lower emissions, it delivers agile driving while respecting the environment. And achieving extended mileage with smooth acceleration, it makes eco conscious driving more enjoyable than ever. Hybrid Synergy Drive.* — a whole new world is taking shape.

Fulfilling performance

Blending smooth, seamless acceleration with satisfying performance. Hybrid Synergy Drive™ delivers a uniquely enjoyable drive.

Higher mileage

Extremely efficient Hybrid Synergy Drive™ pushes your gas further while the simple act of driving is all it takes to charge the battery.

Reduced emissions

Partnering a gas engine with electric power, Hybrid Synergy Drive™ cuts back CO_2 (Carbon Dioxide) and other exhaust emissions.

Surprisingly silent

Hybrid Synergy Drive™ can even run on the electric motor only — offering a driving experience that's surprisingly silent.

TOYOTA

CAN YOU TELL WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS DRINK?

You can't see or taste the hepatitis virus in your drink. And that's just one of the many ways that over a million vacationing Canadians face hepatitis risk every year – even at the best tropical resorts. International Health Authorities consider that Mexico and the Caribbean islands are medium to high-risk areas for acquiring hepatitis A. Hepatitis A and B are serious liver diseases that can sometimes be fatal. Once infected, you could easily spread the illness to others back home, even before you know you're sick. Why take the chance?

Only Twinrix® vaccinations give you and your family simple, long-term protection from both hepatitis A and B. So see your doctor about Twinrix® and stay healthy.



the pineapple is O.K.

the cherry is O.K.

the punch is O.K.

the 2nd ice cube may contain a hepatitis virus

Twinrix

Combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine

The Only Dual Protection Against Hepatitis

www.healthyholiday.ca

GlaxoSmithKline

THIS WEEK

COLUMNS

8 Berbere Amiel
Human beings are a pair-bonding species. Why would any liberal society want to deny same sex marriage?

NATIONAL

14 Up in Fort McMoney
Election wise, Alberta is seen as a waste of time. But given the economic power of the region, one might as well say our future is a waste of time.

18 Herper's gift horse
Even as the Liberal missteps multiply, Conservatives try to keep the message positive. According to a new Maclean's survey, voters are impressed.

19 Strength on unity
As the campaign reached the mid-point last week, Paul Martin made unity an issue, then watched as Stephen Harper won more positive reviews

20 Murder by numbers
Another shooting tragedy in Toronto leads to the spread of even more inaccurate and misleading statistics about gun provenance in Canada.

WORLD

22 No relief for Pakisten
As winter comes to the 'rooftop of the world,' along with infighting over scarce food supplies and a rising death toll, relief agencies are scrambling to help everyone in time.

26 Oesperete Optimism
An estimated 100,000 residents —one-fifth of the pre-flood population—have returned to New Orleans. Joseph Boyden goes back to his adopted home and finds desolation and hope among the ruins.

MACLEAN'S

VOLUME 119 NUMBER 2 JANUARY 09 2006 • SINCE 1905

4 FROM THE EDITORS 5 MAIL BAG 9 SEVEN DAYS
12 INTERVIEW. BETSY HART *talks to Linda Frum.*



JANUARY 9–16, 2006

THE BACK PAGES

42 *NEWSMAKERS*
Mira Sorvino, Einstein, Bob Geldof, Paul and Sheila Martin.

44 *FILM*
Spielberg's *Munich* rewrites history—and George Jonas's book.

52 *TV*
TV shows on DVD: wading through the great flood of extras

53 *TASTE*
Step aside, chef: The patron-designed tasting menu takes over

54 *STEYN*
Why the war on terror is the real women's issue.

56 *BOOKS*
A single New York building tells the story of U.S. capitalism.

57 *FESCHUK*
Swing a thong of celebration: group sex is A-okay in Canada

58 *HELP*
A cancer survivor on getting aggressive with doctors

59 *RECOMMENDED LIST*
Foldable bikes, Craig T. Nelson, arcade game music.

60 *THE END*
Julio Iglesias Puga, 1915-2005

COVER PHOTO BY RUFUS F. FOLKKS/CORBIS
(ABOVE) PHOTO BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

BUSINESS

31 Steve Maich
The Canadian market has been rising for three years straight. Maybe all it will take to keep the good times rolling is a little positive thinking

32 Revenge of the geeks
Refugees from the dot com meltdown of 2001 have quietly rebuilt the industry in Ottawa, setting the stage for a dramatic comeback in Canada's technology heartland.

EDUCATION

35 You heve hete meil
One quarter of Grade 7 students in Alberta report having been harassed via the Internet. Cyberbullying is on the rise. Can anything be done to stop it?

HEALTH

36 Healer to the sters
Xiaolan Zhao is among the most successful practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine in Canada—celebrities from Michael Ondaatje to Sophia Loren swear by her

JUSTICE

38 Fighting fire with fire
The defamation suit against Donald Page is a rare case of a government suing its own citizen. It's also the finale of a bitter feud in an Ontario town

SOCIETY

40 Jesus is our homey
Describing itself as a "cheeky new magazine of spirit and social action," Winnipeg-based Geez is a surprisingly hip, bold take on Christianity.

HOME

41 The smertypents scam
The pony with built-in GPS won raves in Cosmo and sold out online. It would have been a hugely successful product—if only the product existed.

MACLEANS.CA

Join the conversation Which issues are you paying closest attention to during this election? *www.macleans.ca/forums*
Election 2006 Our panel of bloggers comment on the candidates, the platforms and the gaffes. *www.macleans.ca/election2006*
Macleans.ca radio Ten channels of music. At home or at work, tune in to our radio page and listen up. *www.macleans.ca/hveradio*



Send him packing, too

Finance Minister Ralph Goodale announced on Nov. 23 that he would not tax income trusts, capping weeks of Liberal indecision on that file, during which time investors were left to anxiously guess at the government's intentions. Thousands of small investors, afraid of seeing their holdings devastated, dumped trusts in a panic. When Goodale backed away from his taxation threat, many jumped back into the game, some quicker than others.

On the day of the announcement, a rumour hit Bay Street that a decision was imminent, and that it would be good news for trusts. Prices began to rise sharply, and scores of professional traders, privy to the rumour, made a killing. One brokerage passed around an email that day citing a "strong rumour" out of Ottawa that the trust mess was about to be resolved. TD Bank economist Don Drummond received a similar email hours ahead of the announcement from "Liberal strategists." And the head of the Canadian Association of Retired People has said he too received an oblique "heads-up" from Ottawa. Insiders appear to have had an advantage over the average Canadian investor who waited for Goodale's announcement and lost out on the big gains.

So, were the traders who bought trusts that day just beneficiaries of a lucky guess? Or did someone in Finance let slip that good news was on the way? In that case, was it a malicious attempt to defraud, or an honest mistake born of inexperience and/or incompetence? These are the questions that the RCMP must answer. Our national police force confirmed last week that it has launched a criminal investigation into allegations that someone in the Finance department or the Minister's office leaked word of Goodale's choice. At least until that investigation is complete, Goodale should remove himself from cabinet.

We have no quarrel with Goodale's record as finance minister. We recognize that he is a public official of strong integrity. We are not suggesting he was directly responsible for the leak—the RCMP have dismissed him as a suspect. But all of these things, seized upon by Paul Martin in Goodale's defence, are beside the point. The concept of ministerial responsibility extends further than direct culpability for criminal action. It is a means by which we hold politicians answerable for waste, corruption, or malfeasance on their watch, even if they have no direct knowledge of what happened. This principle motivates ministers to keep a close eye on their departments.

That's not to say a minister has to resign whenever some clerk in his administration is accused of mucking up. But if serious allegations do arise, the first exercise of ministerial responsibility is to respond quickly and openly with an impartial investigation.

On this score, Mr. Goodale fell miserably short. As soon as market analysts raised questions about a possible leak, he stonewalled, dismissing the allegations as "character assassination." He insisted "there was no leak from my staff or my department. We are very careful about those things." Weeks later, as evidence of impropriety mounted, he said that he and his deputy minister had looked into the rumours and found "no indication of any inappropriate communication." That's hardly a rigorous and independent investigation, and it looks especially inadequate now that the RCMP have found cause to step in.

There are other reasons for Goodale to resign. As Justice John Gomery wrote in his report on the sponsorship scandal, a minister is personally responsible for "any consequences, including unfortunate ones" of the actions of his political staff. If staffers are under criminal investigation, the minister must step aside just as if he were accused himself.

We recognize this degree of accountability is unfashionable in Ottawa today, but the full concept of ministerial responsibility needs to be dusted off and stood back on its feet if Canadians are to regain respect for their national institutions. We would be glad to see Goodale return to cabinet if and when he and his staff are exonerated. M

FRED CHARTRAND/CP

MACLEAN'S

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Kenneth Whyte

EDITOR
Mark Stevenson

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Peeter Kreitzberg

EDITORS AT LARGE
Ann Dowsett Johnston,
Joanna Pachner (on leave)

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITORS
Dianna de Feniyl
Patric a Khoshy

SENIOR EDITOR AND NATIONAL BUSINESS COLUMNIST
Steve Maich

SENIOR EDITORS
Shanda Deziel
Mary Dwyer
(University Rankings)
Jaime George,
Sarmishta Subramanian
(Features)

SENIOR COLUMNIST
Paul Wells

NATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS
Jonathan Gatehouse,
Charlie Gillis (National Affairs),
Katharine Mackleni (Business)

SENIOR WRITERS
Brian Bethune
Ganyin Nowakowska
Brian D. Johnson

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
John Intin, Nicholas Köhler

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Colin Campbell, Cathy Gulli,
Cynthia Reynolds (on leave),
Barbara Righton

BUREAUS
Ottawa: John Geddes (Editor),
Quebec: Rene Lalonde,
British Columbia: Ken MacQueen,
Washington: Luiza Ch. Savage

RESEARCHER-REPORTERS
Meg Floyd, Patricia Treble

INTERN
Nancy Macdonald

LIBRARY
George Serbjeczuk
(Library Technician)

Design

ART DIRECTOR
Christine Dewdney

ART DEPARTMENT
Brian Morgan
(Deputy Art Director),
Jason Logan
(Design Consultant),
Nathan Sinclair
(Assistant Art Director),
Geneviève Blais
(Senior Designer),
Dan Palkowski,
Janine Van Eck,
Rob Wilson
(Contributing Artists)

PHOTO DEPARTMENT
Andrew Tolson
(Director of Photography),
Peter Bregg
(Chief Photographer),
Jeff Harris,
Julien Chatelain
(Associate Photo Editors)

Production and Technology

DIRECTOR
Sean McCluskey

DESIGN CO-ORDINATOR
Buffy Barrett

SYSTEMS CO-ORDINATOR
Joe Privet

DIGITAL OPERATOR (CONTRIBUTING)
Richard Redlett

Administration

MANAGER OF EDITORIAL SERVICES
Chris Johnston

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Hazel Wells

CARTOON EDITOR
Terry Mosher (Aislin)

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Sally Armstrong,
Michel Arseneault (Paris),
John Bemrose,
Donald Coxe (Chicago),
John Bibbard (Halifax),
Will Ferguson, Kate Fillion,
Linda Frum, Allan R. Gregg,
Arthur Kent,
Adnan R. Khan,
Robert Lewis,
William Lowther (Washington),
Peter Mansbridge,
Peter C. Newman,
Eric Silver (Jerusalem),
Alexandre Trudeau
(International),
Chris Wood

ONLINE SERVICES
maclean's.ca
Derek Chuzzi (Editor)
Pamela Chan (Producer)

How to Reach Us

BY EMAIL
For letters to the editor, press releases, story proposals:
letters@macleans.ca

With letters, please supply name, address and daytime telephone number. We welcome readers' views, but letters may be edited for space, style and clarity.

To search our archives:
www.macleans.ca/search

BY PHONE
To comment on the magazine:
(416) 764-1706

BY MAIL
Maclean's, 11th floor
One Mount Pleasant Road
Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2Y5

Editorial department:
(416) 764-1339
Fax (416) 764-1332

Maclean's Subscriber Services

ON THE WEB
Online service—see Customer Care Services below:
www.macleans.ca/service

BY PHONE
1-888-MACLEANS
(1-888-622-5326)
In Toronto: (905) 946-0084
Office hours:
Monday–Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST

BY MAIL
Maclean's
P.O. Box 850 Stallion Main
Markham, Ont. L3P 8N8

BY EMAIL
service@macleans.ca

Customer Care Services

Visit us online to:
- Subscribe or renew your subscription
- Change your mailing address
- Check your account status
- Report delivery problems
- Check your payment standing
- Give the gift of *Maclean's*
- View our privacy policy
- Check your expiry date
- Pay your invoice
- Learn about the *Maclean's* In-Class Program
- Sign up for Storyline—a free enewsletter about *Maclean's*

Mail preferences:
From time to time, other organizations ask *Maclean's* if they may send some of its subscribers information about products or services that might be of interest. If you prefer that we not provide your name and address (email and/or postal) contact us in any of the ways listed above.

Fragrance-free reading:
Subscribers who do not wish to receive advertisers' scent strips in their copies of *Maclean's* should contact us by phone, mail or email.

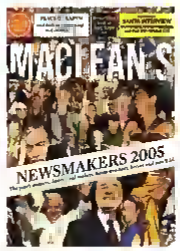


'I congratulate your editor for a first-rate interview with Santa Claus. Please keep up the humour and whimsy, and not just around Christmastime.'

That's a wrap

While 2005 was not much fun for many people, at least your year-end double issue, "Newsmakers 2005" (Dec. 26), was most entertaining. Happy New Year.
Dennis McMahon, Burlington, Vt.

Your double issue was a dog's dinner with page after page of snippets connected (or not) confusingly to pictures by little numbers. It was just too much work to try to match the pictures to the often silly commentaries, and to make it worse, the format went on and on throughout the whole issue. Your From the Editors letter says that your art director and her crew were to be thanked for "bringing coherence to a cast of thousands." I'm not sure they did.
A.E. Mackintosh, Lansdowne, Ont.



What an informative, gentle and refreshingly innocent piece (Santa Claus talks to Kenneth Whyte, Interview). I congratulate your editor and publisher on conducting a first-rate interview with Santa Claus. I enjoyed reading it thoroughly even though I am Jewish. Please keep up the humour and whimsy at *Maclean's*, and not just around Christmastime.
Irena Karshenbaum, Calgary

It was good to at last meet Santa in your pages. The Q & A with Santa biographer Gerry Bowler was funny, informative, and heart warming. No lumps of coal for you guys!
Bruce Littlejohn, Bracebridge, Ont.

Just when the prospect of reading *Maclean's* became as enticing as reading a new novel by some important CanLit author, you changed. Thank you. No longer do I endure a weekly doze fest wondering whether I'm suffering from accelerated old age. Hiring Scott Feschuk? Outstanding. Kudos to a guy that has the potential to be a combination of Peter Gzowski and Rex Murphy. Keep it up, *Maclean's*. God knows this country needs you.
J.R. Toone Sr., Winnipeg

Bashing the Liberals

I found Paul Wells' bash at the Liberal party quite entertaining ("He's unbelievable," National, Dec. 19). We all know Paul Martin isn't a charismatic leader, and he certainly has a habit of making a big deal out of small measures (such as his gun registration and daycare improvements, which really just solidify existing legislation). What I think is important to remember is that we don't elect politicians to charm and entertain us. We elect them to run our country as well as is humanly possible. Looking back at the past few years, one must admit that, overall, the Liberals have done a good job of keeping us on track. Gay marriage, a budget surplus, and a climbing dollar (which, much as it scares exporters, still means that we're doing well enough for other countries to want to invest in us and buy our products) are just a few achievements that Mr. Dithers has managed to bring about in spite of his fear of commitment. Martin isn't a man to make sweeping changes or elicit cheers from the teeming millions, but he is a man who quietly keeps Canada as strong as it's ever been.
Owen Hortop, Montreal

I appreciate *Maclean's* coverage of the election campaign, but I don't believe there is enough emphasis on the biggest issue facing voters: national unity. If Canada is dismembered by the departure of Quebec, then all bets are off. The foundations of our state, especially in provincial jurisdictions like health care, would be badly shaken, and all the political promises on child care, the GST, Aboriginal self-sufficiency and the military could amount to nothing. In this light, it particularly angers me that the federal party leaders cannot put aside their temptations to score petty political points on one another's approach to unity. The latest example is Paul Martin's characterization of Jack Layton's support of the Clarity Act as a flip-flop. Martin should have welcomed the move. I was thinking of voting Liberal, but when it comes to the future of our nation, these counterproductive comments in support of short-sighted political gain are turning me off.
Richard Archer, Ottawa

Urban vs. suburban

Robert Bruegmann's apologia to urban sprawl (Interview, Dec. 12) was as bedazzling in its gall as in its intellectual legerdemain. The interview reads like a plausible defence, when much of it is actually a confession that the suburbias of today are guilty as charged. His defence consists of conjuring up idealized suburbias in a world that doesn't exist, a world where cars are safe and clean, and suburban homes have solar power, and their owners pay the actual public costs of sprawl, many of which are now charged to general government revenues raised in part on the backs of the working poor who cannot afford to live there. One of the worst evils of the suburbs was not even addressed, and that is the banal life it inflicts on children and



CORRIS (RIGHT)

THE BURBS. A reader says one of their worst evils is the infliction of a banal life on teenagers



'Harper's cut to the GST would be a saving every time a low-income family spent a dollar. Check it out. Do the math.'

teens. Outside of the home, suburbia's unrelievedly homogeneous tracts of houses and lifeless corridors of arterial roads deny them two key essentials for healthy development: the experience of nature and the stimulation of community life. Cities built with people, the environment and the public economy in mind would be land conserving, medium-density, mixed-use, pedestrian and transit oriented, with lively public spaces, and flanked closely by wilderness woods and fields. That does not describe suburban sprawl, even in Bruegmann's most wishful dreams.
Dieter Heinrich, Toronto

Although Bruegmann claims that the costs of suburban development are passed down to the developers, external economic costs are abundant. Last month, Transport Canada reported that traffic jams—largely a result of single-car use in suburbs—cost the Canadian economy at least $6 billion each year in lost productivity. And as for Bruegmann's claim that the car is the most efficient means of mass transit the world has ever devised, I would challenge him with the sight of a GO train passing thousands of cars stuck in traffic on Toronto's Gardiner Expressway. The problem with the suburbs is not inherent to single family detached housing. Suburbia can be home to efficient mass transportation. We just do not build it that way.
Dan Thompson, Hamilton

In moving people efficiently, easily and individually from one place to another, cars contribute to the modern illusion that we are self-contained—connected neither to other people nor to our physical environment—and in control. Bruegmann speaks positively of such containment and control in his endorsement of low density suburban developments. He argues that suburban sprawl offers privacy, mobility, and choice—benefits that the single person/family automobile both contributes to and shares. Clearly, desires for privacy, mobility and choice are not inherently negative, however, the reality of life in our society, and on our planet, is that human beings are not alone or in control. The individual who, day after day, travels to and from a suburban home in an automated private space is easily able to lose sight of the social and environmental costs of this convenience. Driving encourages individuals to forget, not only that the machines they are driving are seriously jeopardizing the immediate future of our planet, but also that there are other people in the world.
Heather Burt, Vancouver

Tax cuts and good sense

I must disagree with Steve Maich and his read on the two proposed tax cuts ("Voters, pick your poison," Dec. 26). He refers to the "smart tax cut" of the Liberals and mentions the reduction of income taxes by $30 billion over five years. I bet next week the Liberals will be doubling that figure by offering a cut of $60 billion over 10 years. Who's the dumbest one of all? Please someone tell me how much income tax a family of four earning $20,000 a year will pay? So what is the saving of one per cent on income tax worth to a family living below or near the poverty line? How much would the same family save if the income tax was reduced by 50 per cent? On the other hand, it will cost the same family their total earnings to pay for the essentials, such as clothing, food, heat and shelter, and household items. Yet Stephen Harper's one per cent to two per cent proposed cut to the GST is a saving every time a low-income family spends a dollar. Check it out, do the math, and stop annoying and insulting the intelligence of marginal wage earners.
Carvell Antworth, Fredericton

Steve Maich has shown a good effort to analyze various issues objectively but on the Conservative proposal to reduce the GST, he has missed some points that most economists are ignorant of or are deliberately choosing to ignore. While he says that a large portion of spending is on GST exempt items/services such as mortgages, rent, and food, we must remember that there is GST hidden in all of those costs. Also, if a mortgage is on the purchase of a new home, albeit with some GST rebate, the interest paid yearly is based on the total borrowed, including the GST. The same applies to new car purchases and to any borrowing to pay for goods or services purchased on credit. People at the low or middle levels would have more money in their pockets through a reduction in the GST based on savings on interest as well. Consider also the Liberal idea to cut the dividend tax rate along with various other manipulations of income taxes. These measures do little to help the poor. I believe that you have to walk a mile in the shoes of the poor to realize the importance of reducing the GST.
John Cousins, Oshawa, Ont.

MACLEAN'S

PUBLISHER
Kenneth Whyte

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, R&M AND V&I
Deborah Trepanier

Advertising Sales
Toronto (416) 764-1300
sales@macleans.ca
SVP, SENIOR CONSUMER PUBLISHING
Mitch Bent
VICE-PRESIDENT, SALES
Kathryn Brown
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Lorraine Hoffman
DIRECTOR, SALES, WESTERN CANADA
Jane Avery
ACCOUNT MANAGERS, TORONTO
Marie-Claude Beaudry, Laura Carlson, John M. Griffin, Mike Lambe, Jeff Rackwell, Shelley Tait
DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC CREATIVE
Jacquelyn Loch
MANAGER, ACCOUNT STRATEGY
Clodagh Wilson (on leave)
Montreal (514) 845-5141
ventesquebec@macleans.com
VICE-PRESIDENT, SALES, EASTERN CANADA
Jeanne Preux
MONTREAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Lisa Millette
ACCOUNT MANAGER, MONTREAL
Annie Brisbois, Julie Choquette, Nathalie Rempré
New York (212) 619-6009
VICE-PRESIDENT, SALES, U.S. NORTHEAST
Nicola Clayton

Advertising Sales Administration
ADVERTISING SERVICES MANAGER
Kathryn Mackay
SALES COORDINATORS
Marijka Box, Céline Gauthier, Veronica Sarkijnik
ADVERTISING SERVICES SUPERVISOR
Barbara Lorenzo

Advertising Representatives
Western U.S.: Peter D. Scott
England, Scandinavia: Graeme Brown
France, Italy and Belgium, Switzerland: Bernard Piconne
Germany: Renate Gauf; Arne Gauf
Spain, Portugal, Eastern Europe: D. Brien

Production
VP, PRODUCTION
John Hall
DIRECTOR, IT PRODUCTION
Sattie Chedi
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Aleyde Esseltine

Research
ASSOCIATE RESEARCH DIRECTOR
Ann Hemmes

Communications
DIRECTOR
Sanaal Khanna

Marketing
DIRECTOR
Soom Kwak
MANAGERS
Jamie Browne, Lisa Graham, Sarah Jane Pearce

Promotion
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR
David Hall
CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Jack Ashby
PROJECT SUPERVISOR
Beth Fraser
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
Nathalie Bertin, Monica Vargas
PROMOTION WRITERS
JoAnna Summers, Trevor Stafford

Macleans.ca
VICE-PRESIDENT, CONSUMER PUBLISHING WEBSITES
Louise Clements
DIRECTOR OF ONLINE OPERATIONS
Lynn Shannon
ACCOUNT MANAGER, WEB
Laurie Lucas
WEB SALES COORDINATOR
Kory Bowes

Consumer Marketing
VP, CONSUMER MARKETING
Tracey McKinley
GROUP DIRECTOR, CONSUMER MARKETING
Elizabeth Nyson
DIRECTOR, RETAIL SALES
Peter Wilson
ASSISTANT CONSUMER MARKETING DIRECTOR
Brenda Haskell
MANAGER, MAGAZINE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Monica Kachanski

Business Operations
BUSINESS DIRECTOR
Barbara Angier
BUSINESS MANAGER
Elzbieta Jurecka
REPRINT REQUESTS:
Shai Keen (416) 764-3403
PERMISSION REQUESTS
Christine Johnston
RECEPTIONIST
Barbara Murray

Rogers Media Inc.
PRESIDENT & CEO
Anthony P. Viner

Rogers Publishing Limited
PRESIDENT & CEO
Bruce Sagar
SVP, CONSUMER PUBLISHING AND PRESIDENT, EDITIONS ROGERS-DIDEROT
Marc Brandeau
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENTS
Harvey Enchin, Michael J. Fox, John Miller
VICE-PRESIDENTS
Yvonne Chee Wah, Patrick Renard

ROGERS

Maclean's, established 1905, is published weekly except for occasional semi-monthly expanded or combined issues, which count as two subscription issues, by Rogers Publishing Limited, a division of Rogers Media Inc. Rogers Publishing Limited, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2Y5. Montreal editor: 1200 avenue McGill College, Bureau 700, Montreal, Que. H3B 4G7.

Contents Copyright © 2006 by Rogers Publishing Limited, may not be reprinted without permission. Maclean's receives unsolicited materials (including letters to the editor, press releases, promotional items and images) from time to time. Maclean's, its affiliates and assignees may use, reproduce, publish or publish, distribute, store and archive such unsolicited submissions in whole or in part, in any form or medium whatsoever, without compensation of any sort. This statement does not apply to materials/photos submitted by freelance writers, photographers or literary agents in accordance with known industry practices.

Maclean's ISSN 0024-9262. For subscription prices for one year, including taxes: $60.95 (GST); $65.18 (HST/QST); U.S., $99.00; surface all other countries, $228.00 airmail.

CANADIAN POSTMASTER: Undeliverable copies and change of address notices to: Maclean's, P.O. Box 860, Station Main, Markham, Ont. L3P 8H8

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40070230. Registration No. 09693

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP) and the Canada Magazine Fund, toward our mailing and editorial costs.

U.S. POSTMASTER: Periodicals postage paid at Niagara Falls, NY. USPS 108710. Offices: 2424 Niagara Falls Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-1068. Send address changes (form 3579) to Maclean's, P.O. Box 4541, Buffalo, NY 14240. Printed in Canada by Quebecor World Inc.

Audit Bureau of Circulations Member

PMB

Canada

'Where is it written that Canada should be debating the war in Iraq in our election campaign? As an ally of the U.S., we cannot exempt ourselves and, at the same time, offer advice and debate on the merits of that war.'



CHRIS MACLEAN'S ARCHIVE (RIGHT)

Lesbians and good news

Exactly who determines what constitutes Good News and Bad News and how are they arriving at this judgment? I am outraged by your inclusion in Good News ("Try the Legion," 7 Days, Dec. 12) the story of the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal that found that the Knights of Columbus, a Roman Catholic service organization, were within their rights to deny a banquet hall to two lesbians for their wedding reception. The entrenchment of bigotry hidden under the guise of religious freedom is not good news to many Canadians.
Peter Sinclair, Toronto

Holy typo!

I noticed that in your television story "Two shows succumb to Saturday Night fever," (The Back Pages, Dec. 26), you write, "The classic comedy show has lost it's cutting edge." Mr. Whyte, if you ever let something like this get by you again, I will fly to Toronto to swat your hands. Now let's go over the rules: it's is a contraction of it is. Its is the possessive form of it. Got it?
Anne Baker, Saint John, N.B.

Kong and Humpty Dumpty

Brian D. Johnson is mistaken when he says stop-frame animation was invented for the original 1933 version of *King Kong* ("We Love You Ya Big Ape," Dec. 12). *Kong*'s animator, Willis O'Brien, had used the technique earlier in *The Dinosaur and the Missing Link* (1917) and *The Lost World* (1925). But its true inventor was more likely to have been Albert E. Smith. Who can forget his *Humpty Dumpty Circus* of 1898?
Tim Rostron, Toronto

Staying out of Iraq

Where is it written that Canada should be debating the war in Iraq in our election campaign ("Should Iraq be an issue?" Dec. 12)? Or at any other time for that matter. Columnist Peter Mansbridge should be told that you cannot suck and blow at the same time. Ergo, as an ally of the U.S., you cannot exempt yourself from the Iraq war and at the same time offer advice and debate on the merits of that war. At least Mansbridge recognizes that the U.S. is our most important ally and biggest trading partner, but he and the rest of the Canadian media and our government should have the good grace to either put up or shut up on the entire matter of the U.S. involvement in Iraq. Our neighbours and friends to the south are having their own debate on the issue and Canadians should leave it to them to resolve.
Eric Hayne, Edmonton

Mansbridge must be running out of interesting things to write about. If any of our political leaders want to talk about pulling Canadian troops out of Afghanistan, that would be something that they have a right to discuss, but Iraq should be off limits. Iraq is a situation that was unilaterally created by the U.S. for reasons unclear to many of us and it should now be their responsibility, and theirs alone, to get it properly resolved.
Doug Paquette, Greenfield Park, Que.

IN MEMORIAM

GLEN ALLEN 1940–2005

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • Glen Allen, a senior writer and editor at *Maclean's* in the 1980s and a journalist known for his poetic writing and award-winning coverage of social issues, died last month. He was 65. Allen, whose father was former *Maclean's* editor Ralph Allen, had a long and varied career as a newsman. He worked at the *Toronto Star* before earning acclaim as a freelance writer covering the 1973 military coup in Chile. He worked for the *Montreal Gazette* and *Kingston Whig-Standard*, among several other papers across the country, and spent two years teaching in China.

In an age when reporters began using tape recorders, Allen stuck to pencils and notepads, which he scribbled in with intensity, capturing simple scenes in a way few others could, says his long-time friend and former colleague at *Maclean's*, Carl Mollins. "He would take the reader with him." Allen was at his best when he was "meeting the real people across Canada and telling their stories in ways that made them matter, that took them out of the commonplace," says Kevin Doyle, a former editor of *Maclean's*.



Allen won a Media Human Rights Award and a National Newspaper Award in 1982—the latter for a story about a young person struggling with drug abuse. His skill at writing about the disadvantaged came from his own long struggles with severe depression and alcohol, according to friends and colleagues. "Partly because of the illness, he had a sense that many peoples' lives are not a straight clear line, and he had a lot of compassion for that," says his brother Gene Allen.

In the past year, his illness and a stroke deprived him of some of his ability to write and work as an English tutor, which was a major blow, his brother says. On Monday, Dec. 19, he was reported missing from the Toronto East General Hospital, where he was being treated for depression. He was found the following morning near a set of railroad tracks, where it is believed he died of a combination of an overdose and exposure.

He is survived by two children, Vanessa and Morrison Allen, from his first marriage to Wendy Allen, and by a daughter, Aimee Rose Ambroziak, from a subsequent common-law relationship with Alycia Ambroziak. M

Wish I'd been there

Why would any liberal society want to deny same-sex marriage?



BARBARA AMIEL

Sir Elton John married his Canadian sweetheart David Furnish just before Christmas and yes, I wish I had been there. Elton wasn't singing but I'd like to have heard that cocoa baritone voice reciting his vows. The last thing I want these days is to party, but by the same token these days have given me a good lesson about life. When it comes to what counts, Elton and David don't stint. "He has an incredible capacity for friendship and his loyalty is second to none," said art dealer Robin Hurlstone (ex-Joan Collins), a major star in the Elton firmament who will romp with the newlyweds shortly on a North African safari.

There was some sniping in the cheap seats. "Will David be Sir David?" asked the British tabloids, always sensitive to matters of protocol. I suppose he will not because in fact they weren't actually "married" to a standard that suits the College of Arms or *DeBretts Peerage*. The U.K.'s Civil Partnership Act is just about identical to the U.K.'s Marriage Act except that its anemic little procedures can't be performed in a church. As in so many other things, the state has the monopoly on homosexual unions. I can't for the life of me see why David shouldn't become Sir David if he wants to. As spouse-in-waiting he's already been a better half than any number of the titled muckmucks I see running around.

Canada has gone all the way by making same-sex marriages legal. Good for us. Human beings are a pair-bonding species and I'm at a loss as to why any liberal society would want to deny the expression of pair bonding in instincts in homosexuals. Apart from the old "Who is the Mrs.?" sort of jibe, there are very few legitimate reasons to oppose same-sex marriage. (And, incidentally, anyone who has ever shaken hands with Elton will know who isn't the Mrs. in his family. The man has the grip of a sumo wrestler.)

Those who take their religion full-blooded have legitimate objections to seeing the Adam and Eve of Genesis 2: 18-24 being replaced by Adam and Ernest. Not to mention Matthew 19, which gives us the immortal "what God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Unfortunately for them, Matthew finally lost the battle in the Supreme Court of Canada, December 2004, with its decision that Parliament had the right to redefine marriage. But you can't argue with those who follow a Supreme Commander rather than a Supreme Court. A system of belief is beyond the reach of debate. All we can do is ask believers to remember that in a secular society, the commands of any particular god are limited to the circle of his followers—apart from the god of *sot disant* liberals who demands obedience from us all.

I was rather hoping that Elton and David might become semi-biological parents, but all my polite enquiries have been met with shock. Still, the instinct to procreate is shared by most human beings, including some male couples and possibly the majority of lesbians.

Until very recently procreation required an intimate act between a man and a woman. Technology has trounced that need. But the ingrained idea of "the family" meaning a man and woman will hang on. It reflects the experience of human beings as much as any religious belief. Social institutions don't just happen. They grow out of our nature. At least 25 per cent of my friends and acquaintances may well be gay but in the larger society minimally 90 per cent of us are heterosexual and possibly up to 98 per cent. Even two per cent leaves a whopping number of human beings who have no sexual interest in the opposite gender, but not enough to set the tone for social institutions. No wonder society's psycho-sexual agenda has always been that of a flaming heterosexual.

Some opponents of same-sex unions might revise their views if they could see close-up the degree of care between many homosexual partners. The anatomy may be different but the emotional life and division of roles are pretty much the same. Elton has a way of making everyone around him feel completely safe. David is the first to worry about whether Elton is chilly as night settles over an alfresco supper.

Most of us know same-sex unions that have weathered thick and thin through decades including the tough sledding of AIDS. What complicates our species is that we are pair-bonding philanderers rather than monogamous storks. The gay community does have the capacity for some pretty heavy philandering before settling down to the level of fidelity necessary to maintain a marriage—which raises concerns among the more sexually plodding.

If you want to protect the institution of marriage, denying it to same-sex couples makes precious little sense and with today's assault on the family unit, it may even do some harm. Heterosexuals have done a rotten job of defending the family's autonomy. I wish no cloud on any union, but I can wager one thing: efforts like that of the U.K.'s Tony Blair to force on the family, *inter alia*, mandatory counselling before marriage, mandatory reconciliation tribunals before divorce and legally binding Home-School Agreements governing behaviour to be signed by parents and children would be as a candle in the wind with the gay community. They've had to organize for their rights and if we're very lucky, now they'll organize for ours. M



SIR ELTON JOHN AND DAVID FURNISH When it comes to what counts, these two don't stint

I was hoping they'd become parents, but my polite enquiries have been met with shock



7 DAYS
A LOOK AT THE WEEK OF 1/9

PROGRESS ON HOMELESSNESS AND HEALTH CARE, THE DOOR TO PERVERSION SWINGS OPEN, GEORGE MICHAEL IS OUT IN IRAN

GOOD NEWS

OMG! It works...

Maybe some of our most intractable social problems are manageable, after all. Last week, the City of Toronto announced that its Streets to Homes program, which assigns trained workers to assist homeless people in applying for social assistance and finding a place to live, has helped 533 people get off the streets in less than a year since its launch. And in Alberta, a pilot project has slashed average wait times for knee and hip replacement surgeries to 11 weeks from the usual 82 weeks.

Flu? Done it.

Amid growing public concern over *C. difficile* and avian influenza, Canadian health officials have announced there have been only half as many confirmed flu cases across the country this season as during the same period last year. Epidemiologists speculate that the strain of flu now circulating made an early appearance in 2004, allowing Canadians to build up an immunity.

Know your audience

Congratulations to the Canadian Institute for Legislative Action and the Canadian Shooting Association for abandoning a $100,000 ad campaign criticizing the Prime Minister's recent handgun ban proposal. In the sombre aftermath of the Boxing Day shooting of 15 year old Jane Creba in downtown Toronto, low public sympathy toward gun lobbyists is a given.

Wham ban

This page has been relentlessly critical of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (see past issues). In the interest of balance and fair play, we note that when the Jew hating, Holocaust denying, nuke craving Iranian president announced last week that his high council of cultural revolution wanted state broadcasters to stop playing "decadent" Western music in favour of local product, he showed excellent taste by singling out for particular abuse the work of former Wham front man George Michael and his '80s illicit luve ballad *Careless Whisper*.

BAD NEWS

Who needs a hug?

The *New York Times* has had a tough run of late, from the Jason Blair scandal to the recent Judith Miller melodrama, and it seems to be affecting the paper's mood. A Christmas editorial agreed with Scrooge that this "cracked old world" is just as messed up as it seems. The peace and good will for which we long, the paper lamented, "does not simply appear in the sky overhead or lie embodied one morning in a manger. We come into this season knowing how we want it to make us feel and we are usually disappointed because humans never cease to be human." The *Times* acknowledged there's no great harm in longing for better—it's just futile. Send cookies to N.Y. Times, 229 West 43rd St, New York, N.Y., 10036.

Russia's slide

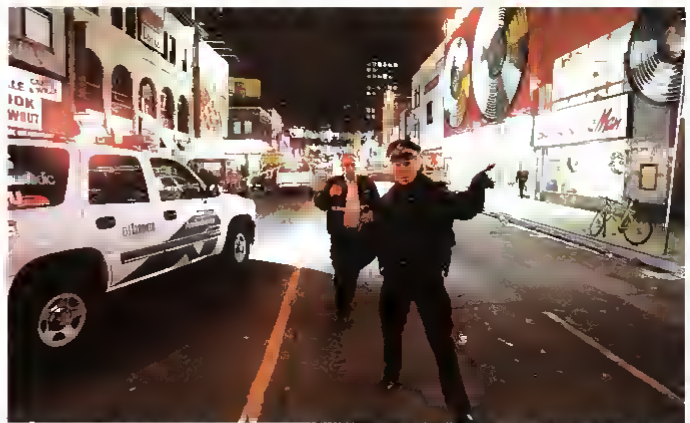
Andrei Illarionov, economic adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin, resigned last week, citing restrictions on his ability to speak his mind and rampant state intervention in the economy. "It is one thing to work in a partly free country, which Russia was six years ago," he said. "It is quite another when the country has ceased to be politically free." Putin responded by firing Illarionov.

Justice swings

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the practice of liberated individuals crowding onto a stage at a busy Montreal club to grope, fellate, and mount one another does not violate Canadian standards of decency. "Only those already disposed to this sort of sexual activity were allowed to participate and watch," wrote Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin for the majority. "No one was pressured to have sex, paid for sex, or [was] treated as a mere sexual object for the gratification of others." This leaves the door open for non-commercial consensual perversion of almost any form, no matter how offensive or dehumanizing. So Parliament can continue to sit as well.

Wash a dish, hombre

Spain has thrown the full weight of the state behind its efforts to make men do their chores. Earlier this year, the civil code was reformed to include in marriage contracts a pledge that spouses share housework, child rearing and elder care. The government had already introduced an advertising campaign to coax men to help out around the house. Now Madrid is scrapping one of its most treasured social traditions—the three-hour lunch—in order to address the work family imbalance. Most Spaniards leave for work before 9 a.m. but don't return for roughly 12 hours because of their leisurely midday break. Spanish government ministries will now close no later than 6 p.m. M



SHOT DOWN In the aftermath of 15 year old Jane Creba's murder in Toronto—a bad time to fight a gun ban

ACTIONPRESS/CP
RENE JOHNSTON/TORONTO STAR/CP

7 DAYS



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF EO SCHREYER

He has the experience and he's prize beef in terms of visibility for the New Democratic Party; and when former governor general and Manitoba premier Ed Schreyer kicked off his campaign in Selkirk-Interlake, he was greeted with rapturous respect. On turning 70, Schreyer accepted the nomination on Dec. 21, reading sagely from John Kenneth Galbraith in the Selkirk rec centre. "We already have 800 signs up on real properties," said an assistant, "not just ditch pigs."



THE WEEK AHEAD: ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Argentina plans to pay off its US$9.8-billion debt to the International Monetary Fund this week, a sign that the economically troubled nation is improving. Also on the mend is Mario Lemieux, following last month's irregular heartbeat incident. Doctors say he may return to work this week. U.S. employment figures will be released, and were expected to show ongoing strength, eroding the damage to job markets caused by last year's catastrophic Gulf Coast hurricanes.

DISCOVERY

The littlest enemy

Was it the Russian winter, military defeat or lice that defeated Napoleon's troops in 1812. New research of French troops' remains has uncovered body parts of lice carrying DNA for the bacteria that cause trench fever, while the soldiers' dental pulp indicated the presence of typhus, a louse-borne disease. The study by the Universite de la Mediterranee in Marseille provides the first proof that the half-million troops who invaded Russia were felled by diseases. Only 25,000 left Russia.



GOOD DANCERS? Good mates?

Shades of pale

The reason behind why humans have different skin colours has eluded scientists for years. Now, they have determined that in gene SLC24A5, pale-skinned Europeans have a variation that carries the amino acid threonine, while other races carry another, called alanine. Still unsolved is why Europeans have the variation, one theory suggests pale skin helps boost production of vitamin D in sun-starved residents of higher latitudes.

Why Travolta was hot

Are good dancers more desirable to mate with? A study from Rutgers University has measured perceived good dancing ability against known factors that attract mates. Using computer animated, non-gender renderings of 183 dancing Jamaican teenagers, researchers asked the dancers' peers to evaluate stick-like figures' dancing abilities. They measured the results against known desirable characteristics such as body symmetry and found a correlation between the perceived quality of dancing and perceived mating quality.

Comet captured

Stardust, a robotic spaceship that made a rendezvous with the comet Wild 2, will return a capsule to Earth carrying the comet's dust later this month. Stardust travelled halfway to Jupiter with a giant tennis racket-shaped net to gather the dust from the comet, which has spent most of its life near Pluto. The findings may yield clues about how planets formed.

Hitting the big one

Knocking a ball out of the park seems to be a matter of perception. Researchers are discovering a correlation between the batting average of softball players and how large they perceive the ball to be. Using diagrams of eight different sized circles, researchers asked 47 players to point to a size that best represents the ball they see. Sluggers with averages of .500 or above pointed to larger circles than did less gifted hitters. A similar study has been conducted in which people wearing heavy backpacks perceived destinations as farther.

KIDS

Minor booze problem

A record 4,800 minors were treated in Britain for alcohol-related diseases in 2004. Authorities reported the rate for illnesses such as alcohol poisoning and liver disease were up 15 per cent over 1997. Said Nick Sweet of Britain's Alcohol Recovery Project, "If we're not careful, our kids will die before us."

WILD KINGDOM

Zoo patrol

It's never a good idea to seek refuge in a tiger's enclosure even when you're a bandit armed with a knife running from security guards. An alleged bandit tried just that last month in the zoo in Bloemfontein, South Africa, and was mauled to death by a Bengal tiger. It wasn't the first time zoo residents took on the bad guys. In 1997, a gorilla named Max confronted another thief who entered his enclosure, bit him on the buttocks and cornered him until police arrived, despite having been shot twice by the bandit.

Pink and deadly

A zoo in Chennai, India, has put two albino cobras on display. Although albinism is rare in snakes in India, the hooded duo were acquired in nearby Sri Lanka, where the characteristic is more common. The cobras measure 1.5 and 1.6 m, and are just as venomous as their fully coloured counterparts.

Horses wigged out

Tegan and Tojo were minding their own business last week, grazing in a paddock in Devonshire, England, when someone hacked off their tails. The 1.3-m-long horse tails were neatly cut just before the dock. Police speculated that the otherwise unharmed animals had been quarry for a wig-making gang that would sell the tails for hair extensions.

Some dump

Baronet Sir Benjamin Slade has offered to give away his $2 million mansion and 1,500 acres of land in Somerset, England to anyone—even strangers—provided they have DNA that closely matches his own. He's tried to sell the estate, with three lakes, 430 head of cattle and 12 peacocks but couldn't find a buyer. And, he added, "None of my relatives wants anything to do with my dump."

MONEY

Fake bank robbery

Three teenagers in Pattaya, Thailand, were caught passing counterfeit money to a sharp-eyed street vendor last week. When police investigated, they learned that the trio had stolen the money during a break-in at a branch of the Siam Commercial Bank, where a manager had set aside newly found forgeries in an easily accessible drawer.

Pressing agenda

A couple who won $30 million in Britain's Lotto last week said they planned to buy a new iron. Gabrielle Nash bought clothes at Marks & Spencer and husband Darren bought an equally mid-market Ford Galaxy. They revealed that they have been playing the same numbers since the lottery began in 1994—550 times.

NAPOLEON? Probably left Russia scratching his head



EVERETT COLLECTION (LEFT); ARCHIVO ICONOGRAFICO, S.A./CORBIS (BOTTOM); AP (RIGHT)

CP (LEFT); TERJE EGGUM/SCANPIX (BOTTOM); AP (RIGHT)

MORTALITY

Smoke in your eyes

Passive smoke may increase the risk of the most common form of blindness—age-related macular degeneration. Living with a smoker for five years doubled the risk of the disease, according to data recently published in the *British Journal of Ophthalmology*. Smoking a pack of cigarettes a day for 40 years tripled the risk of contracting the illness.



SMOKING A cause of blindness?

Ho pain, no addiction

A new pain reliever holds promise for superior relief without losing its effectiveness and becoming addictive in the way that conventional opioids such as morphine do. Known as MDAN, the class of drug tricks one kind of pain receptor in the body into turning on while turning another off. Developed at the University of Minnesota, the drug avoids morphine's problem of stimulating both receptors, which leads to tolerance and addiction.

Poultry evidence

Wild migratory birds are not playing a major role in transmitting avian flu. Although thousands of wild birds have died from the H5N1 flu virus, researchers are unable to find evidence that they are principal carriers of the disease around the world. Many fear H5N1 could mutate from a deadly bird disease into a human flu pandemic. To date the culprits in spreading H5N1 seem to be chickens and other poultry, prompting experts to warn that the virus must be contained at poultry farms.

POLL WATCH

Retiring debt

The average age of Canadians retiring is 58, according to an Ipsos-Reid poll. Of those surveyed, 85 per cent believe they should pay off their debts before heading into the sunset, although 48 per cent don't believe one needs to be completely debt-free.

Living with Palestine

More than half of American Jews favour the establishment of a Palestinian state, according to a poll published late last month by the American Jewish Congress. Of those polled 56 per cent favour establishment of such a state, but 60 per cent opposed compromising on Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli control.

IN OTHER NEWS

Urine trouble now

Nebraskan Reno Tobler had a strange idea of providing residents in central Iowa with Christmas gifts: he would toss detergent bottles filled with his own urine over their backyard fences, as many as 10 of them since autumn. Tobler, who was charged with littering and harassment, told police it was a longtime hobby.

Plonk cure

Following a recent European Union summit, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi sent his Swedish counterpart 24 bottles of Italian wine. The gift, he said, was to help Goran Persson overcome the trauma of having to drink British wine, as supplied by summit host Tony Blair.

One-man disaster

Lost in the Michigan countryside, a motorist got stuck in a muddy driveway last week. Alone, he tried to push his car out, but with no one to operate the vehicle he weighted the accelerator with a toolbox. It worked: getting the car free, but the car then proceeded through a bean field at speeds of up to 140 km/h before succumbing to a tree.

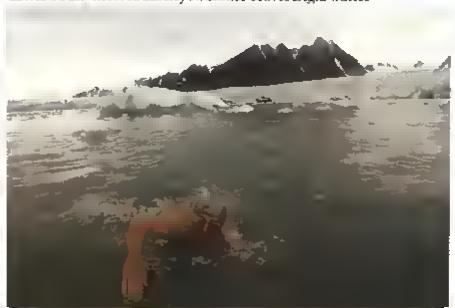
No one was even hurt

Armed robbers in Germany held up a courier last week forcing him to open the trunk of his vehicle so they could grab a suitcase full of money. Wrong suitcase: they fled with the courier's first-aid kit.

Telemarketing works

When Crystal Rozell of Consumer Direct Marketing in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., called a number she talked to an 85-year-old man in Illinois who had fallen down and spent the previous night in the cold unable to move. Although he had a cellphone he could only receive calls on it. Rozell contacted local authorities.

LEWIS PUGH Most southerly swimmer braves frigid waters



Good cop, soft cop

Three police officers in Billings, Mont., were suspended without pay for mishandling packets of the erectile dysfunction drug Levitra, found on a driveway. Disciplinary documents say that instead of logging the drugs as "found property" they took them home.



PACKER Cricket's revolutionary

Short, cold, but sweet

The penguins may not have been impressed, but when Lewis Pugh took to the waters of Antarctica recently he set a record for the most southerly swim. Although it was barely a kilometre, Pugh dived into zero-degree water, completing the journey in 19 minutes, wearing a bathing suit, swim cap and goggles.

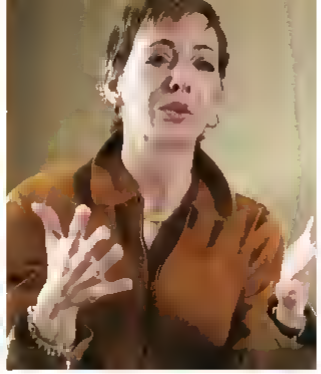
IN PASSING

Kerry Packer, 68, Australian media baron, who took his father's properties and built a $6-billion broadcasting and print empire and became a notorious scold for politicians and a tyrant to his employees. He revolutionized the game of cricket by creating the World Series in 1977.

Tokuji Wakasa, 91, Japanese airline executive who was convicted in 1976 of accepting $1.39 million in bribes in return for getting his company, All Nippon Airways, to buy airliners from Lockheed Aircraft. The so-called Lockheed scandal was one of Japan's biggest postwar bribery cases. M







'We're *all* pushover parents. Sometimes I have to hold my book up to my own kids and yell: "Does this thing mean *anything* to you people?" '

BETSY HART TALKS TO LINDA FRUM

Modern parents are pushovers. So says Betsy Hart, a syndicated columnist from Chicago and first-time author of the new book It Takes a Parent: How the Culture of Pushover Parenting is Hurting our Kids. *The mother of four young children, Hart lays bare an unpleasant truth about today's parenting culture. parents are wimps. We put our children on a pedestal, fret about the injurious effects of discipline, indulge each emotional whim, honour every impulse, and then are confused when we discover our children lack moral character*

Q *Betsy, I have to warn you, I am talking to you from the phone in my home office, and the door is closed, but at any moment, one of my three children might come bounding in here demanding attention. I can't say I've done the greatest job getting them to respect my boundaries.*

Linda, I understand. I had to threaten my own children. Sometimes I have to hold my book up to them and yell: "Does this thing mean *anything* to you people?"

So we are both pushover parents?

I think we all are to some extent.

What exactly is the "culture of pushover parenting" that you write about in your book?

I think it comes down to being told by the "experts" that children come into this world full of inherent virtue and goodness. They just need a little tweaking here and there. They need a parent's cheerleading. Not so much a parent's guidance. And once you believe that—that children have all this inherent wisdom—then the stage is set for being intimidated by them. Versus thinking that children have flawed little hearts just like the rest of us. They can be selfish and tyrannical and "all about me." And it's our job as parents to civilize them. That means not letting them intimidate us—at least not all of the time.

I suppose part of the problem is that many parents aren't even aware they are pushover parents.

I think that's right. As you know from reading my book, I'm more than happy to talk about my foibles. But I hope I am aware of them. So that the times I am pushed over, and my kids talk me into something, it is the exception and not the rule.

I love your phrase "no shouldn't be a no-no." Why is it so hard for parents today to say no to their kids?

Because we're so afraid of adversity for our children. We so desperately want to spare them any disappointment, any frustration, any upset. Well, that doesn't do them any good. Because then they grow up and they literally have never been told "no." They have never learned to restrain their passions. And they become adults who can't restrain their passions. We need to learn to use "no" as a complete sentence. Let our children experience not being able to have or do something. Let them get angry with us. They'll survive and three minutes later they'll forget about it and move on. But you know, I fall into this trap myself, especially with my little one. I'll say "no." And she'll say, "What about tomorrow?" And I'll say, "Okay, maybe tomorrow." Instead of "No. It is *never* happening."

That's probably because it takes a lot of strength to say no to children. You have to gird yourself for battle.

A It takes just a little bit of practice. And I'm not talking about dropping no's like atom bombs. But when it's appropriate, let children experience whatever frustration is at hand. When we do that, we see that they survive it, and we survive. It too. Sometimes we're surprised and say "Oh, that wasn't that bad."

You write that the "ultimate dumb thing" a parent can do is ask four children, "Where do you guys want to go for dinner?" or "What movie do you guys want to see?"

Right. Because then they start screaming and fighting and everybody is miserable. But I've done it too. I've done it all.

We "idealize and idolize" our children. How did we get here?

There are a couple of different answers to this. For one, it's the secularization of our culture. People just don't have the religious tenets that they used to—to believe that children and mankind have these selfish tendencies. And the secularization is exacerbated by the rise of the parenting experts over the past 100 years or so.

And our culture of competition and over achievement is a part of this as well? People use their children as surrogates for their competitive impulses?

Yes, but I think that also goes back to the secularization. There is no longer any thought of things eternal. It's all here and now. It's all in our kids. They are the only thing that is going to live on after us. So we've got to really put *everything* into those children.

And this is why you write that you want your children to go to heaven rather than to Harvard?

A Yes, because first of all there is no indication they are going to the latter. But I do really try to maintain that longer-term view. And that helps a lot when, in the short term, things aren't always going so well.

You write that parents need to accept that most kids are ordinary. Very few of us have given birth to gifted, exceptional children, and that's okay.

Yes, and I think parents really have to ask themselves, "*Is* that okay with me?" And I fear more and more parents are saying: "No!" I think that's a real tragedy. You have to see your children the way they are, or you are going to make everybody miserable, including yourself. I don't know, maybe it's because I was raised in the Midwest, but I am just more comfortable with "average." It's more important what's going on in their hearts, not just in their pocketbooks, or on the gymnastics floor. It seems to me if we can get to that understanding, we can really enjoy them, and enjoy life, and they might even be happier.

Indeed, you suggest we are living in an age of joyless children. Responding to our children's every whim actually makes them quite unhappy.

Right. They don't learn to appreciate. They don't learn to be grateful. And they don't learn to curb their passions. So they become a slave to their passions. That's going to make anybody miserable.

What are some of the typical indulgences that you see going on?

You have the material indulgences. If Suzy down the street got one level of American Girl doll, then we have to get the next level up. And if the child kicks and screams and says "I've just got to have this or I'm going to die," well, we don't want them to be disappointed. But I also think it's bigger than just material indulgences. It's things like, "I want to go to the mall *RIGHT NOW!*" "I want to express my passions and scream because Suzy irritated me, and don't you dare tell me not to express my passions." It's a host of things. "I want to be the centre of the family universe and have everyone focus on me right this very moment and indulge me for hours if not days because I'm disappointed because I didn't get this spot in the school play." I used to tell my kids, "I'm sorry you're upset but you don't have the right to make other people miserable. We've mourned that you didn't get invited to the birthday party, and we're done. We're going to move on now."

When there's more than one child we bend over backwards to make things equal.

I think we always want to say: "Oh, but you'll get invited to the next birthday party." Or "some wonderful thing is going to happen to you too." But we can't always match what one child is getting with another child—nor should we. We should help our children find joy in somebody else's good fortune.

What is a family cup?

This idea came from friends of mine. Throughout their lives when something wonderful happens in their extended family—a job promotion, a baby, a new house—that family member receives the family cup to celebrate. The goal is always to get rid of the cup quickly—so you are always looking to make somebody else the focus. My family is too young for a family cup right now, but when I'm out with one of my children I might go out of my way to buy a little something for another child. If I'm out with Victoria and we see an inexpensive ship model, I might say to her, "Look, Tory. You know how Peter loves ship models? Wouldn't he love that? Let's surprise him." It's good to get them used to that. To take joy in giving something to someone else.

The self-esteem movement has been a partner of pushover parenting. Some might suggest you are cruelly defeating Victoria's self-esteem by appearing to care more about Peter.

Well, you're not going to do anything crazy, like on Christmas morning have a big pile of presents for one child and coal for another. We're not being ridiculous here. But the whole self-esteem movement is all about building up little egos, which tend to be built up quite nicely on their own. I want my kids to take esteem from the idea not that they are great or perfect right now, but that they can choose to do better tomorrow.

Q *We have been taught, by parenting experts such as Penelope Leach, never to criticize the child—only the behaviour.*

Right—criticize the behaviour—as if it just showed up in the cereal box that morning or was delivered by FedEx. It didn't come from the child's heart. It's odd, because when our children do a great thing, and act unselfishly, we're all over that. "Oh, Tommy's such a good kid." But the minute they hurt another child, or act selfishly, oh boy, *that* can't be coming from the heart. And yes, sometimes they are tired. Sometimes they are overstressed. But sometime, those things do come from the heart and if we are not willing to face up to that, we are not doing our children any favours. We see them not as they are. And we don't help them struggle with the weaknesses of their hearts.

You make no pretense about being a perfect parent. You have a tremendous awareness of how hard it is to do it right all the time.

Oh yeah! Someone asked me why I didn't pretend to be a perfect parent—and I said the truth was bound to come out. You know, we all fail and we all blow it. And when you do—just pick up and move on. It's about perseverance over the long term, not getting it right at the moment.

A big part of your message is to trust yourself as a parent. Don't panic that you're not doing it according to "expert wisdom."

Yes, or according to the latest headlines and parenting magazines. If your parenting doesn't look like somebody else's—that's okay. I also think one of the things we deprive ourselves of is the ability to go to other parents and admit that it's hard, that we're not perfect, and to get insights from other wise people. I think we've been so intimidated that we have to parent perfectly and we have to read all the expert stuff. There used to be a time when, if your child was acting badly, you could go to your friends, your family, or your pastor, and say, "I'm really struggling with this one. Give me some insights here." We are so afraid to do that now. We deny ourselves real opportunities as parents because we let perfect be the enemy of the good. M



'It's our job to civilize them. That means not letting them intimidate us—at least not all of the time.'

PHOTOS BY TIM KLEIN/GETTY IMAGES

UP IN FORT McMONEY

Election-wise, Alberta's seen as a waste of time. Our future is a waste of time?





PAUL WELLS

Wells' Second Rule of Politics teaches us that when everyone in Ottawa knows something, it isn't true. Everyone knew Stephen Harper would be the angry avenger, hammering the Liberals day after day on corruption. Everyone knew the first half of the campaign wouldn't count. Everyone knew nothing would happen between Christmas and New Year's. Wrong again.

Everyone knows that, since Alberta is sewn up for the Conservatives, there's no point in any of the leaders wasting much time there. But surely places can be interesting even if they don't contain a lot of swing ridings. So I headed to Fort McMurray.

The Fort McMurray-Athabasca riding is immense, running from a little north of Edmonton all the way up to the Northwest Territories. It probably is sewn up for Tory incumbent Brian Jean, a brisk lawyer and entrepreneur with an upswept shock of red hair. He ran for the first time in 2004 and carried 60 per cent of the vote, thumping his Liberal opponent, a three-term mayor of Fort McMurray. When I called this year's Liberal, Mel Buffalo, he filled a quiet moment in our conversation by saying, pleasantly, "They're throwing me to the wolves here, eh?"

The traffic into and out of town is like something out of a Mad Max movie. Sometimes people die.

LIBERAL CANDIDATE MEL BUFFALO: 'They're throwing me to the wolves here, eh?'

If you were leading a national party, you'd probably give Fort McMurray a miss too. A general election is a lot of things, but nobody pretends it's a serious discussion about the future of the country in all its gorgeous complexity. But there is a lot going on up here at the north end of Alberta that would be worth thinking about, if anyone wanted. It all begins with the immense oil-sand deposits in the area. Brian Jean (pronounced Gene, not Zhawn) sat at the Franklin Ave. Quizno's—which he owns—and described some of the effects.

"We provide three per cent of the GDP of Canada right now and we're going to be at six per cent in seven years," he said. "Financially there's no more important spot in all of Canada for Canada's future."

PHOTOS BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

In real money, that means $36 billion was invested in the oil sands from 1996 to 2004, with perhaps another $45 billion to come by 2015.

"We do have other things," Jean said. "We have a lot of the softwood, a lot of the cattle, a lot of natural gas. But we have 98 per cent of Canada's oil. And oil is Canada's future. It gives us the ace up our sleeve to accomplish the things we need to. And it has been ignored dramatically by the federal government over the past 10 years. It's unbelievable."

Jean's family moved to McMurray in 1968 from the British Columbia interior. They opened a general store, then launched the town's first newspaper. Brian Jean bought the building with the Quizno's and the print shop in 1997, then built a car wash in the parking lot out back. "Our net worth as a family has gone up 10 times in the last 10 years—from $2 million to $20 million. Some from good investments and some, quite frankly, just from the environment."

It's quite an environment. The immense mines and petrochemical plants north of Fort McMurray have drawn tens of thousands of workers, mostly men, who don't mind hard work in return for excellent money. You can make $100,000 or more in the plants, and the population is exploding as a result, from about 35,000 in 1995 to over 60,000 today and perhaps 100,000 by 2012.

So it's a boom town and it's raining money. Remind me what the problem is?

"We have no housing," Jean said. "We have no land to build housing. We have no people because they can't live anywhere." A modest bungalow will run you $400,000 around here. There are stories of people paying $700 a month for a cot in a walk-in closet. That's great if you're making the big bucks in the plants, but if you have an ordinary service job, it puts most housing out of reach.



OIL CHANGE: Fort McMurray has the oil sands, but 'no housing and no land to build housing'

Which makes Fort McMurray the Canadian capital of wage inflation. "This Quizno's, for instance, closes at least once a week because of shortages of staff. And I'm paying $14, $15 an hour to most people here." The restaurant closes? Why? "Somebody just doesn't show up. They get a better job down the street somewhere. It's not a normal town, they don't give notice."

'We need another million people in Alberta and certainly 30,000 or 40,000 in Fort McMurray'

You don't need to spend much time in Fort McMurray to see what Jean is talking about. In most of the world, restaurants advertise their food. Here restaurants, bars, retail outlets all advertise their job openings.



CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE BRIAN JEAN: Ottawa's attitude to the region is 'unbelievable,' he says

Well, "advertise" is a little gentle. Basically they beg. "JOIN OUR TEAM," a sign outside McDonald's said. "DRIVERS EARN AN AVERAGE $180 A NIGHT," said a sign outside a video rental shop.

Since it can be a pricey town to live in, many live in Edmonton instead and race up Highway 63 into Fort McMurray by the tens of thousands every Sunday night, returning in equal numbers on Thursday or Friday. The resulting traffic clot is like something out of a Mad Max movie. Sometimes people die.

"I will not travel on a Thursday night, a Friday night or a Sunday night," Jean said. "I will not let my kids on the highway during those days and I've made a position that my campaign workers are not allowed to travel then as well. And nobody fights that, let me tell you. Nobody complains."

Let's pause to tally a few of the issues at play in Fort McMurray-Athabasca. Natural resources. The environment. Public infrastructure. Canada-U.S. relations, because who do you suppose buys most of that oil? The rise of China, because it's a burgeoning secondary growth market. Immigration. "We need another million people in Alberta and certainly 30,000 or 40,000 in Fort McMurray," Jean said.

What else? Fiscal federalism: at the sprawling, otherworldly Syncrude plant north of town, company spokesman Alain Moore pressed into my hands a study showing that the federal government already gets about 41 per cent of the revenues from the oil sands, compared to 36 per cent for the Alberta government.

Mel Buffalo makes a pretty good case that Aboriginal policy should be one of the riding's issues too. Buffalo, the Liberal who volunteered to me that he's being thrown to the wolves, is a Samson Cree who drove up from Edmonton for lunch in the cafe of the Radisson Hotel. He's the president of the Indian Association of Alberta and, after studying

many subjects at many schools, he's now a master's theology student at St Stephen's College, University of Alberta He says that, instead of importing talent from across Canada and outside the country to work at the plants, it'd be better to train and empower the local community, particularly members of First Nations "They're not anti development," he said "They want in on the development"

Of course it's not the only plank in Buffalo's platform Like the incumbent MP and just about everyone else, Buffalo wishes Highway 63 could be upgraded so it would begin to handle the traffic But his first issue is simply scraping enough money together to mount a decent campaign

Alberta can be a tough place to be a Liberal "I asked the head office if there were any ridings open Mine was already taken, Wetaskiwin in central Alberta So they said, 'Fort McMurray might be open, we'll get back to you' Two days after the writ was dropped, the western regional director, Kent Davidson, gave me a call and said, 'If you're interested, Athabasca-Fort McMurray is available' I said sure. And the rest is history"

Maybe not quite yet. Buffalo was welcome to run up here, but the national campaign is so busy trying to prop up Anne McLellan in Edmonton that there's no money left for Fort McMurray Athabasca. "I don't have five cents to put together," Buffalo said. "It's really exciting I'm doing a low profile campaign I don't want to get into a position where I'm having to use my own money I want to sort of get $100 from 100 people, that sort of thing"

Buffalo's been making as much use of free media as he can "I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Edmonton Journal* on gun control, which should be appearing as a guest column," he said "It was about a two page letter regarding how helpful gun control is to alleviate the problem of gang violence within our native communities, particularly in central Alberta."

Is Paul Martin's proposed handgun ban a popular issue among rural, small town and boom town Albertans? "Hunters don't use handguns," Buffalo said, before adding, "plus Alberta can opt out and say, 'we don't want that handgun legislation' I'm sure Alberta would opt out because there's a significant gun lobby here" So one of Buffalo's campaign planks is his support for a policy that probably won't be implemented where he's running

While it's understandable that the national leaders have no time for Fort McMurray, it's also only fitting that the feeling is mutual. At the Newfoundlanders' Club on Riedel Street, where you can get a pretty good plate of panfried cod and scrunchions, Bruce Nicolle and Maitland White shared a drink and discussed their disdain for just about the entire political species

"Politics isn't worth a roll of beans," said Nicolle, who's originally from Rocky Harbour, Nfld "They're in it for their own good" That being said, he's a Martin man. "For me personally, Paul Martin, it's too bad he got caught in this Adscam because he's a good man"

White, the more soft-spoken of the two, from Sandy Cove, nodded "For me, he's the man" And if Stephen Harper wins? "It won't be too long before we have another election, that's what I think"

The two have moved so far from home for the opportunity, even if it comes with its share of monotony and high property costs. "Somebody's got to populate the world and it might as well be us," Nicolle said "We sure do a good job of it. The Island could sink if we all went home. I could go there and collect the welfare, but who the f - wants to do that? Too much pride for that"

I can't stop thinking there should be some body in this campaign who could speak to the contradictory bundle of hope and frustration, opportunity and risk, that has come to characterize so much of the current national moment Or at least somebody who'd like to try There's more to the story of Fort McMurray than the simple question of whether it can be slotted into a red or blue column, just as there's so much more to the story of Montreal or Waterloo or Windsor or Prince Rupert or Halifax

In St John's I heard Paul Martin say, six or eight times, how much he loves Newfoundland and Labrador There was no reason to doubt him But I took a stroll down Water Street and bought books of poetry by Des Walsh and David L Benson, and the fierce and often angry love in their work seemed entirely alien to this campaign or any I could imagine

Walsh has a poem he wrote on Yonge St in Toronto in 1995 He writes about how *A sudden scream of sirens and voices/ reminds all from there that where we're from/ is a gift, something we open at birth/ and carry with us for the rest of our lives* Elsewhere, back home, he is much darker *I have seen the damage/ from Trepassey to Plum Point, the beached bones of nationhood/ corroded like dreams of plenty*

The scale of what happens in this country on any given day—the hope and pain, the amazing possibilities and the intractable challenges—is so far beyond the abilities of our leaders to describe, much less address, that I'm left wishing only that some of them would admit as much

On Friday, Martin said, more or less in passing, that Canada is now engaged in a "great national battle" over Quebec's future Really? And his solution is to double the length of his daycare program? To ban handguns, unless some premier somewhere doesn't want to ban them? Stephen Harper, meanwhile, wants to cut the GST and station troops in our big cities It all seems a bit off-topic, somehow It's a big country out there—and it never looks bigger than when teams of strategists try to reduce it to 40 battleground ridings M

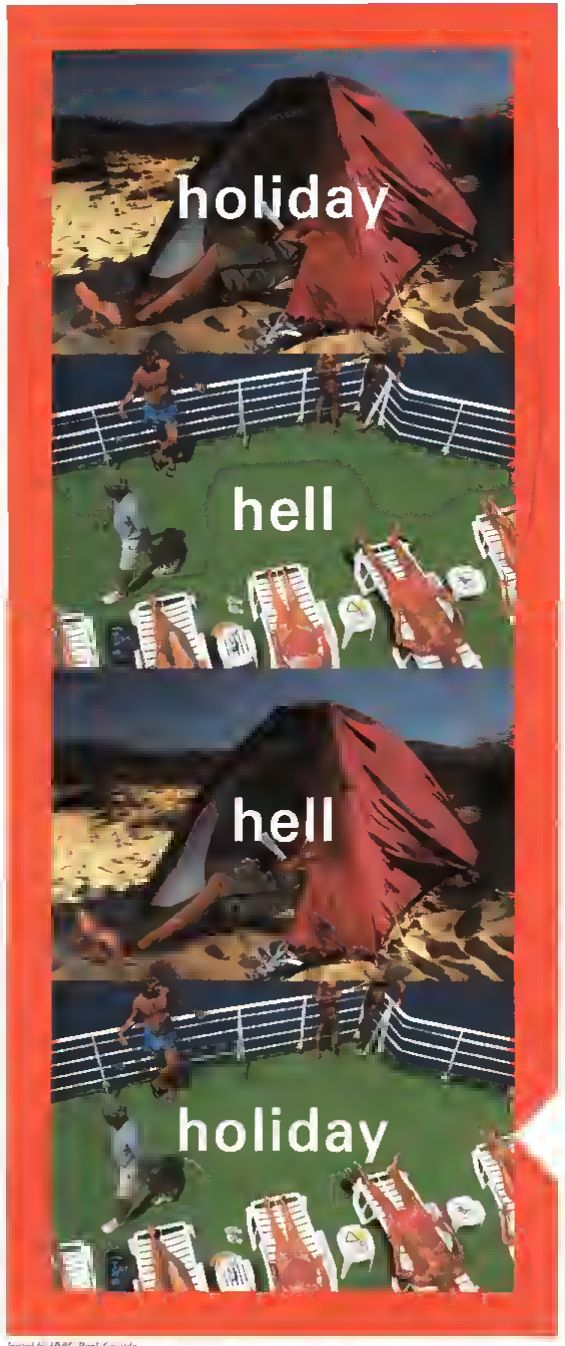




BOOM TOWN Newfoundlanders Maitland White (left) and Bruce Nicolle have come for the opportunities, (right) The Boomtown Casino

PHOTOS BY PETER BREWS/MACLEAN'S

The First Nations community 'is not anti-development. They want in on the development.'



The world has a million different ways of having a good time

And an equal number to make sure you don't. How you choose to wind down is almost guaranteed to wind someone else up

At HSBC, we see this through our 100 million customers around the world. That's a lot of views on how people want to work, and how they want to play

The world would be a dull place indeed if we all agreed on everything. But it's much more fun because we don't.

HSBC
The world's local bank

Issued by HSBC Bank Canada





HUG FEST: Harper in Fredericton, Martin in Vancouver. And Ralph Goodale in the headlines

Letting them hang themselves

The new 'positive' Stephen Harper played the Goodale news exactly right

BY JOHN GEDDES • In a typical week in politics, news that police were investigating a federal department would cue an outburst from any opposition leader. Imagine the din in Question Period if the House had been sitting when the RCMP revealed that it was probing how the Finance department handled its sensitive tax policy move on income trusts. But the midway point of a tight election campaign is not a typical moment, and Stephen Harper's reaction was far from a QP style tirade. Rather than lashing out at the Liberals, or even demanding that Finance Minister Ralph Goodale step down during the investigation, the Conservative leader adopted a weary, what-else-is-new air. "It's the final nail," Harper said when asked about the investigation. "Ralph Goodale can stay on and run around in his limousine until Jan. 23. What's important is that he and his government are run out of office."

His message: this is Liberal business-as-usual and that won't change as long as they hold power. Greg Lyle, managing director of Innovative Research Group, the firm conducting the *Maclean's* Canada 20/20 panel, a series of weekly Internet opinion surveys during the campaign, says Harper played it just about perfectly. "If he had gone on a harangue, it would have reinforced his too negative image, which is already a problem for him," Lyle said. Harper has been fighting the angry-right wing-guy factor throughout the campaign. Last week, 42 per cent of the 2,817 panellists who participated in the 20/20 survey, said the Tories are "too negative," compared with just 19 per cent who pin that label on the Liberals.

That means when an opportunity like the RCMP investigation arises, Harper needs to be careful about how he exploits it. Rather than taking the opportunity to vent, he needs to more gently nudge voters to see the news as another reason to think about changing the party in power. Harper is vulnerable whenever the campaign tone turns testy, but he stands to gain when a hankering for change is in the air. Asked which party is best able to bring real change to Ottawa, 30 per cent of 20/20 panellists give the nod to the Conservatives, and only 10 per cent to the Liberals. Media coverage of the RCMP investigation will benefit Conservatives most if it fuels a time-for-a-change sentiment. "This is a gift for them," Lyle said. "It's a news hook that allows them to make that real change case."

The lead held by Liberals outside Quebec at the beginning of the campaign has evaporated

The good news for the Liberals is that the story broke in the quiet week between Christmas and New Year's Day. The RCMP confirmed they were looking into the Finance department's actions in a letter to Winnipeg MP Judy Wasylycia-Leis, the NDP Finance critic whose complaint apparently helped prompt the investigation. Wasylycia-Leis had asked the RCMP about a flurry of trading in shares of income trusts, and stocks related to them, on Nov. 23. The suspicious spike, which had been widely noticed, took place only hours before Goodale held a news conference to say he would not be imposing a tax on income trusts, as some had feared.

Still, the news of the investigation shifted the focus—yet again—in a direction Liberals had to find uncomfortable. While last year's campaign featured Harper on the defensive on too many days, it's Martin this time around who is being forced to bob and weave. First, one of his closest aides, Scott Reid, remarked that Canadian parents might blow a proposed Tory child care support payment on "beer and popcorn." Then a senior Ontario Liberal, Mike Klander, tastelessly paired a photo of Toronto NDP candidate Olivia Chow, wife of NDP Leader Jack Layton, with one of a chow chow dog on a website. Those are the sorts of embarrassing misfires Liberals used to mock Tories for making. And then there is Harper's strategy of doggedly announcing new policies, large and small, day after day. While methodically laying down the planks of his platform hasn't been exciting, it has meant that most of the time Harper is earning respectful, policy-centred coverage.



LAYTON LENDS A HAND in Castlegar, B.C.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: J.P. MOCZULSKI/REUTERS; PAUL CHIASSON/CP; JACQUES BOISSINOT/CP; CHUCK STODDY/CP

That unspectacular, disciplined campaign appears to be making a difference. The 20/20 Canada panel, by charting shifts in panellists' support for parties, shows a small but significant swing to the Tories. Of 1,669 panellists who completed the survey in the first week of the campaign and also in the fourth week, about one in six had changed their party preference. Looking at those switchers, Conservatives picked up more votes than they lost from both the Liberal and NDP camps, and also picked up votes from the pool of panellists who were undecided at the outset. In particular, the Tories gained a full per cent more than they lost in exchanges with the Liberals. One per cent may not sound like much, but this is a race of millimetres. Outside Quebec, where the Bloc Quebecois is far ahead, the race is too close to call. In the rest of Canada, the 20/20 panel pegged Liberal support at 37 per cent, the Tories at 36 per cent and the NDP at 19.6 per cent.

Those Innovative Research numbers, along with other polls, show the lead Liberals enjoyed outside Quebec at the beginning of the campaign has evaporated. That suggests Martin can't afford to let the Tories keep setting the agenda as the race to the Jan. 23 vote enters its second phase. Late last week, the Prime Minister signalled he hopes to shift the focus to "values." More specifically, he said: "We'll be talking a lot about families, about what we believe families require." On that theme, though, the 20/20 poll suggests Martin doesn't enjoy an obvious edge. Asked which party would do the best job on child care, for instance, 27 per cent picked the Liberals, 26 per cent favoured the Tories and 29 per cent leaned toward the NDP.

But Martin also highlighted another main theme—the spectre of a possible third referendum on Quebec's future sometime in the next few years. "We'll be talking about national unity," he said, "and the great battle in which we are engaged as a nation." That's the sort of full-blown rhetoric Harper has been avoiding in his low key, incremental campaign. Martin has good reason to think he can beat Harper if voters come to believe their country is at stake. Asked which leader loves Canada most, 33 per cent in the 20/20 panel said Martin, just 16 per cent Harper. This could be turning into a contest between a scrambling incumbent who needs to turn up the emotional volume, and a patient challenger who must keep things calm. M

MEDIA TRACKING

STRENGTH ON UNITY

As the campaign reached the midpoint, Paul Martin made unity an issue, then watched as Stephen Harper's promises won more positive reviews

BY JOAN BRYDEN • Casting Paul Martin as Captain Canada in this election must've seemed a no-brainer to Liberal strategists. After all, the Liberal party has monopolized the national unity dossier in this country for decades, perpetually chosen as the party best able to hold the separatist threat at bay.

But a funny thing seems to have happened on the way to the Jan. 23 election. At the campaign midpoint, an analysis of newspaper coverage suggests Conservative Leader Stephen Harper has wrested the unity mantle away from the Prime Minister. "Both Harper and the Conservatives are doing well in the national unity debate—presenting relatively clear policy proposals and, as a consequence, dominating an issue that Martin introduced," says Stuart Soroka, co-director of McGill University's Observatory on Media and Public Policy (OMPP), which conducted the study.



SHOWING THE LOVE: In Quebec, Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe is way out in front

Martin got the unity ball rolling during last month's televised debates, with his impassioned assertions that he would never allow Quebec separatists to break up the country by trickery. But it was Harper who subsequently picked up the ball and ran with it. Martin's debate performance was "passionate" but he never moved beyond rhetorical flourishes (like asserting that fighting separatists was part of his DNA). "Policies seemed to be lacking so the momentum died," said Soroka.

Harper, by contrast, followed up the debates with specific promises to give Quebec a seat at international forums, like UNESCO, where the province's unique cultural and linguistic concerns are at stake, and to rectify the so-called fiscal imbalance, ensuring all provinces have sufficient money to fulfill their constitutional obligations to deliver health care and education programs. Although the Tories have little apparent voter support in Quebec, Harper's proposals were well received in the province, winning an endorsement from Liberal Premier Jean Charest. "That the Conservatives came to quickly dominate coverage of national unity is quite telling," said Soroka.

The conclusions are part of the OMPP's 2006 Federal Election Newspaper Analysis project, carried in *Maclean's* throughout the campaign. The OMPP tracks coverage in seven major dailies: the *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *National Post*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Calgary Herald*, *La Presse* and *Le Devoir*. It tallies the number of mentions each leader and party receives, rates them as positive, negative or neutral, and then subtracts the percentage of negative mentions from the positive mentions to arrive at a "net tone" for the coverage.

During the first three weeks of the campaign, national unity was the fourth most topical issue, mentioned in about eight per cent of the newspaper reports and opinion pieces monitored. In the week following the Dec. 15 and 16 debates, however, national unity jumped to the top of the agenda, mentioned in 12 per cent of the coverage. The related intergovernmental affairs issue was mentioned in eight per cent, while taxes were at 10 per cent, and international affairs at nine.

Immediately following the debates, the net tone of the coverage of Martin improved to minus three per cent from -15 per cent, reflecting reports of his strong debate performance, particularly on the unity file in the English encounter. At the same time, the Liberals' net tone improved to -15 per cent from 23 per cent. However, Martin couldn't sustain the momentum. By Christmas, the PM's net tone had slid back to -11 per cent, though the party continued to improve to -13.

By contrast, Harper sustained a small drop in his net tone over the weekend after the debates. But that turned around the following week with the unveiling of his unity proposals. By Christmas, Harper's net tone was plus-eight per cent, up three points from the previous week. His party, meanwhile, wound up the first half of the campaign with a net tone of plus-four per cent, up two points.

NDP Leader Jack Layton ended the first half with a net tone of plus-three per cent, his party with plus-two per cent. Bloc Québécois Leader Gilles Duceppe garnered a net tone of minus-three per cent, his party minus seven per cent. M



AS MOURNERS VISITED the site of Creba's death, Miller insisted half the guns are stolen

MURDER BY NUMBERS

ANOTHER SHOOTING TRAGEDY IN TORONTO, MORE DODGY STATS ABOUT GUN PROVENANCE

BY CHARLIE GILLIS • Repeat a statistic often enough and it will eventually take on the ring of gospel. This seemed to be the operating theory last week of Toronto's mayor, David Miller, in the aftermath of the Boxing Day shooting in the city's downtown core. In interview after interview, he claimed that half the handguns seized by police in Toronto originate with firearms dealers or collectors, reaching the street after they are stolen in break-ins or hold-ups. After the death of 15-year-old Jane Glenn Creba, an innocent bystander who'd been out shopping with her mother and sister, such a scenario cried out for action. It was a number with resonance.

It certainly worked for Paul Martin and the federal Liberals. Less than three weeks before the shooting, the Prime Minister promised an "outright ban" on handguns should he win the federal election, drawing a lashing from critics who pointed out the basic emptiness of the policy. Yes, Toronto and other major cities have a growing problem with gun violence, opponents argued. But handguns have for years been effectively off-limits to all but collectors, target-shooting clubs and police. Any ban would cater to this crowd. These owners already face strict storage and transportation requirements that make loss, theft or misplacement rare, said Conservative leader Stephen Harper, among others. So why punish them?

Miller's stat would provide a pretty compelling reason—if only it were reliable. Unfortunately, the notion that half of Toronto's handguns are stolen from collectors and shops stems not from any rigorous study, but from anecdotal information gathered from officers, a spokesman for the Toronto police told *Maclean's* last week. Other, more solid, evidence points to smuggling, not theft, as the primary source of illegal firearms in the country: one study performed by the RCMP-led National Weapons Enforcement Team found that 94 per cent of illicit guns seized on the streets of Vancouver in 2003 originated in the United States. At the same time, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reports that Canadian police are lodging record numbers of requests for the ATF to trace guns seized in this country during criminal investigations.

The mayor's bit of licence-taking might seem less serious if his remarks didn't come at such a critical moment. Last week's shooting has landed guns and gangs at the centre of the federal election campaign, and now, with human lives and hundreds of millions of tax dollars at stake, reliable information is crucial. Instead, Canadians are getting woolly "facts" to justify a handgun law that, on its face, seems redundant. (Toronto's police chief, Bill Blair, has been conspicuously cagey about the ban idea, calling instead for reforms aimed at keeping gun-toting criminals behind bars—stiffer sentences, more restrictive bail conditions, and an end to extra credits for time served in pretrial custody.)

The strategy might shield Miller from persistent criticism that he's soft on gun violence. But for anyone trying to sort out the stances of the federal leaders on this issue, it's a distraction. Both Harper and the NDP's Jack Layton have called for tougher sentencing, tougher border controls. Yet their arguments have been lost as the Liberals—with Miller's support—try justifying their proposal for a ban. So too have Martin's own, more concrete proposals to fight guns and gangs: $300 million for increased police presence on the streets and at the border, and $50 million for troubled youth.

These ideas at least have some basis in fact, meaning they have a fighting chance of reducing the number of gun deaths in Toronto from this year's record high of 52. For the purpose of measuring success or failure, this is a useful bottom line: if gun homicides have declined significantly by this time next year—let's say 50 per cent—then Mayor Miller will have one statistic worth repeating. M

charlie.gillis@macleans.rogers.com

FOR THE RECORD

NO DOUBLE-CROSSING FOR DAVID KILGOUR

The Alberta MP left the Conservatives in 1990 over introduction of the GST, crossing the floor to the Liberal benches. This year he quit the Liberals over numerous issues including same-sex marriage. He was immediately wooed by the Tories to cross back over. Kilgour, who is retiring as an independent, refused. "I debated it with myself a lot," he said last week. But "if I had gone back to them this spring, I would look like a complete and utter opportunist."

STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR/CP



YOUR MONEY GOES FURTHER WITH ROGERS

$100 PER MO.*

Call now to get four Rogers services for only $100 a month

ROGERS HOME PHONE™
Now, you make the call.™

- Includes one calling feature (like voice mail or call display)
- Keep your existing phone number, phone and jacks
- We take care of the details with your current provider
- Access to competitive long distance plans that suit your needs

ROGERS™ PERSONAL TV™
Now, you run the show.™

- Access to over 150 all-digital channels
- Rogers On Demand – instantly access up to 2,000 movies and shows
- Timeshifting – watch shows from 5 different time zones

ROGERS™ YAHOO!® HI-SPEED INTERNET ULTRA-LITE
Now, you control your Internet.™

- Up to twice the speed of dial-up**
- Doesn't tie up your phone line
- PC anti-virus protection included at no extra charge
- Unlimited hours online

ROGERS WIRELESS™ MEGATIME PLAN
Mega airtime for mega talkers.

- Get tons of evening, weekday and weekend minutes and messages
- Choose the plan that suits your needs
- Choose from the hottest phones, exclusive to Rogers

Or choose any of these services from $25-$31 a month

CALL 1 877 862 4830

For details and conditions, visit rogers.com/getallfour
*Wireless handset extra. Pricing subject to taxes and System Access Fees ($4.25/mo. for Home Phone; $6.95/mo. for Wireless)

ROGERS™
Your World Right Now

*Certain conditions apply. Wireless handset extra. Pricing subject to taxes and System Access Fees ($4.25/mo. for Home Phone; $6.95/mo. for Wireless). Offer available to residential customers in serviceable areas who subscribe to all services as described above and who commit to Better Choice Bundled discount program for 2 years. Basic cable, Rogers Wireless prepaid and corporate plans do not qualify. Early cancellation fees apply and/or discount rate may vary if any service is terminated prior to expiry of commitment period. Offer and pricing subject to change and cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. See www.rogers.com/getallfour for conditions, restrictions and details. **Modem set up. 128 Kbps for download; 64 Kbps for upload. Actual online speeds can vary with Internet traffic, server or other factors. Comparison to dial up: 128 Kbps for Rogers Yahoo! Hi Speed Internet Ultra Lite vs. 56 Kbps for dial up. †Service usage subject to terms of End User Agreement. ™Trademarks of Rogers Communications Inc. used under license, or of Rogers Cable Communications Inc. or Rogers Wireless. ®YAHOO! is a trademark of Yahoo! Inc., used under license.

NO RELIEF FOR PAKISTAN

Winter comes to the 'rooftop of the world,' along with infighting over scarce food supplies and a rising death toll. Story and photos by Adnan R. Khan.



The Neelum Valley used to be a peaceful place, the jewel of Pakistan's stake in Kashmir, named after the Neelum River—"*neelum*" means "blue gem"—and its ice-blue glacial waters. Now, nearly three months after the devastating earthquake that rocked the region, killing at least 87,000 people, Pakistan's sapphire valley continues to fracture, both literally and figuratively. Aftershocks threaten to dislodge entire mountainsides, daily rockslides bury roads newly cut out of cliff faces, and winter, notoriously brutal in this alpine environment, is looming. But perhaps more significantly for the months ahead, fissures have formed in society as well, pitting relief workers against survivors, survivors against survivors, and Pakistani authorities against everyone. In the midst of the chaos, despite the massive global relief effort, some victims of South Asia's most destructive natural disaster in decades are falling between the cracks.

"Humans live off humans. That's the sad reality." It's not often you find a Red Cross worker who will speak so frankly about his work. They are famously diplomatic when it comes to dealing with the media and they have to be: it's the only way they can retain the neutrality that gives them access to some of the most inaccessible disaster areas in the world. But this one is willing to talk, albeit anonymously, as a helicopter delivers yet another load of relief supplies to this Pakistani army supply depot: blankets and foodstuffs destined for a few of the estimated three million people left homeless by the 7.6 magnitude tremor that struck the region on Oct. 8. "I don't know if these supplies will reach the people that need them most," says the worker. "To be frank, I've never experienced the level of theft and dishonesty as I've seen in Kashmir, but I'm not surprised. I've seen these types of operations too many times to be surprised by people taking as much as they can for themselves at the expense of others."

With winter setting in, relief agencies are scrambling to ensure help reaches everyone in time. In some villages, crowds of men gather around helipads, waiting all day for the next relief flight to arrive—as their homes remain demolished, their maize harvest untended, and their women wonder when they will get back to the task of preparing for the winter season.

The chaos is stretching the patience of many relief workers, even as earthquake victims scramble to survive. In the remote and vulnerable village of Katha Chogah, 2,500 m above sea level in the upper Neelum, locals say relief is no longer being sent in. "Four or five Pakistani army flights came in during the early days after the earthquake," says Muhammad Gujjar, a 67 year-old villager. "But people started fighting over the supplies they brought. Some of the stronger clans took control of the goods and distributed them among their own family members. Then, the flights suddenly stopped."

Since then, many villagers have had to fend for themselves, constructing temporary shelters out of the rubble of their shattered homes. Food supplies have been scarce, only the odd 4x4 has made the treacherous 2½-hour journey up the dirt track from the main road, bringing small quantities of basic supplies such as flour and cooking oil—sold at premium rates. Once the snows come, all vehicular access will likely be blocked. Villagers will then have to make the two-day long round trip by foot to the main road, carrying back any supplies they can.

"We'll survive the winter as best we can," says Gujjar, taking a rest with his sons from rebuilding one of the family homes. "What other choice do we have? We have to work for ourselves. Waiting for relief to arrive helps no one. We're working as a community now, sharing whatever supplies we have with the people who need them the most. That's the only way we will survive." But the co-operation is limited. Gujjar points to one house a few hundred metres from his own, roughly reconstructed out of scrap wood. It belongs to one of the clans he and other villagers accuse of stealing relief supplies.

At that house, Fatima, the wife of the family patriarch, nervously points out the cache of tents and medicines stored in a corner. "This was left over after we distributed supplies to the rest of the villagers," she says, visibly agitated. "I'm not lying when I tell you this. We were fair in how we gave out things." In fact, Fatima insists, the men in her family, conspicuously absent, have gone again to the relief supply depot on the main road to collect more for the village.

But other villagers scoff at the suggestion of altruism in Fatima's family. "They will keep it all for themselves and we will be left with nothing," says Sattar Mohman, a 55-year-old villager recovering from a broken leg he suffered in the quake. For people like Sattar, faith in the future has crumbled along with the chunks of mountainsides shaken loose by the massive tremor. And cynicism is spreading not only among the destitute but also those working frantically to bring them aid.

> 'To be frank, I've never experienced the level of theft and dishonesty as I've seen in Kashmir.'

"The Pakistani government is going beyond the needs of these people," says Dr. Ahreena Badar, 26, a physician from Karachi working with the U.K.-based Merlin relief agency at



FINGER-POINTING 'If there is another tragedy, it will be the people's own fault.'

Panjkot, a village four hours by road from Katha Chogali. "It's not sustainable. The more these people get, the more they ask for. They're becoming dependent on aid, just like the Afghan refugees who came to Pakistan when the civil war started there 25 years ago." Many aid workers and Pakistani military officers agree, though a few concede that it's too early, in light of the impending winter, to be influenced by the negative side of the relief operations.

With so many people left homeless, the scale of the earthquake in Kashmir rivals the devastation left in the wake of the Asian tsunami. In some ways, it is worse. The millions left homeless in the altitudes of the Karakorum mountains face a climate as unforgiv

Millions are homeless in a region where death from exposure is common in the winter

ing as the earthquake itself. A recent cold snap in northern India and parts of Pakistan, in areas that were spared the full brunt of the quake, is a grim forecast for the coming months: at least 38 people have died so far as a result of freezing temperatures. Death from exposure is common in this mountainous region, famously called the Rooftop of the World, even in the best of times. And these days are, according to most locals, the worst of times in living memory. Even in the best case scenario, if enough relief was to reach 99 per cent of the affected population, that would still leave as many as 35,000 people vulnerable.

Todd Shea, project coordinator for Operation Heartbeat, a U.S. NGO providing medical relief primarily in the Jhelum Valley, says the logistical difficulties of working in as inaccessible a region as Kashmir have been the biggest hurdle facing relief efforts. "Even if we had all the helicopters we needed," he says, "the terrain would make it impossible for them to all work at the capacity required to meet the demand. Many of them would just end up sitting idle." Theft and dishonesty are compounding the problem, Shea admits—even as some officials deny that a problem exists. "Everyone has what they need to survive the winter," says Maj. Farooq Nasir, a spokesman for the Pakistani army. "One hundred per cent of the affected areas have been serviced. If there is another tragedy, it will be the people's own fault."

The reality is far different in Bhari, a village of 110 people tucked into a narrow gorge 1,900 m above sea level on the dirt track to Katha Chogali. Unlike the villagers farther up the mountainside and those below along the Neelum River, the people in Bhari have barely seen any relief. In fact, sandwiched between towering cliffs, they've barely seen sunlight. Their homes rendered unlivable by frequent rockslides because of aftershocks that continue to inject fear into daily life, they subsist on the meagre supplies they received in the initial round of relief missions shortly following the earthquake.



NOWHERE TO GO Many won't leave their homes, for fear of losing what little they have left

The tents that were provided are useless now against the persistent chill. With no sunlight to provide some warmth during daylight hours, the stream running through the village has frozen over. Nighttime temperatures plummet below freezing and the drafty shelters the villagers have managed to build out of corrugated metal sheets provided by the Islamic Relief Foundation—the only NGO to visit them—have not been properly winterized with plastic sheets and tarpaulins to block out the wind. "Supplies never reach us," says Muhammad Yousuf, 38. "Some helicopters flew over on the way up to Katha Chogali. We tried to wave them down, we even set up our own helipad, but we never received any of the aid they dropped off. And the aid that reaches the villages in the lower valley never reaches us either—it's used up by the villagers there."

At the Pakistani army's relief depot, a two-hour drive from Bhan, the commanding officer is unimpressed by the description of the village. "These people all complain that they don't have enough," he says, lounging on a mound of blankets in his heated tent. "They're lazy and greedy. They're hoarding supplies." He refuses to send a team to check on them, arguing there aren't enough resources to spare for every villager who complains about needing more.

Outside the officer's tent, evening has fallen, and the temperature along with it. It is another clear night, in a two-week series of clear nights that have been a blessing for people in places like Bhari and Katha Chogali. The snows are late this year, but when they come, they will be severe. And the consequences are likely to be tragic. M



The new BlackBerry 8700r™
Only at Rogers.

AND YOU THOUGHT YOU COULDN'T BUY TIME.

Introducing the ultimate time-saving device for small business. The BlackBerry 8700r from Rogers. Now instead of racing against time, make the most of it.

What's new with the 8700r:
- Get high-speed Internet access virtually anywhere.
- View attachments like PowerPoint® and Excel in true format on a vivid LCD screen.
- Get the power of a built-in Intel® processor.
- Go hands-free with Bluetooth® and speakerphone

Why Rogers is #1 for BlackBerry:
- Rogers EDGE network is the largest high-speed wireless data network in Canada
- Dedicated end-to-end support gets you up and running and keeps you running smoothly 365 days a year
- Rogers runs on the only network that lets you use your device overseas.*

BlackBerry

*Visit rogers.com/roaming for full roaming details

ROGERS
Your World Right Now

GO TO ROGERS.COM, 1-866-852-3655, A ROGERS WIRELESS, ROGERS PLUS OR ROGERS VIDEO STORE FOR DETAILS

BUY ONLINE AND SAVE

RIM and BlackBerry marks and images are the exclusive properties of Research In Motion Limited, used with permission. Yahoo! Y! and the Yahoo! and Y! logos are the trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Yahoo! Inc. Intel® is a trademark or registered trademark of Intel Corporation. Internet browser layout may not appear exactly as shown. ™Rogers, Mobius Design, Your World Right Now, Rogers Wireless, Rogers Plus & Rogers Video are trademarks of Rogers Communications Inc., used under license. © 2005 Rogers Wireless. All other brands, product names, company names, trademarks and service marks are the properties of their respective owners.





AN ISLAND OF ADULTS: In post-flood New Orleans there are more men than women, and it feels as though children have been banished

A desperate sense of optimism

Joseph Boyden goes back to New Orleans and finds desolation—and hope—among the ruins

THE ISLAND

It's easy sitting here on my stoop on Magazine Street between Louisiana and Napoleon Avenues to imagine that Katrina never visited New Orleans. My anal neighbour across the street has decided to paint the front of his home yet again, and the traffic buzzes by steadily, almost as busy as it used to be. But if you look at the smaller details—the oaks missing limbs, fridges and stoves sitting dumbly by the road, waiting to be picked up, the utter lack of life on the side streets—you begin to sense that something terribly wrong happened here.

A strip of New Orleans is indeed alive. The higher ground. It winds along the Mississippi, stretching from Audubon Park in Uptown, bound between Tchoupitoulas and St. Charles, through the Garden District to the Warehouse District to the Central Business District and ending on the far side of the French Quarter. It has a newly coined nickname among my friends. The Island. And some of my friends who've watched with disgust and fear as our local government battles the big government have taken to calling it The Isle of Denial.

Part of the disgust has to do with a certain Garden District crowd, old money wealth who even at the best of times never seemed to care for much outside of their mansions and oak lined avenues. A number of these people have even spoken out in the past couple of months, publicly, that the new socio-racial shift in New Orleans is a gift and a godsend. Far fewer people of a certain race now in town, which equals less crime. Fewer headaches. In part as a response to these people, my friends have created a website, *nolafugees.com*, to explore, often with humour, the fiction and the reality of life in the city post-Katrina.

A city where only an estimated 100,000 out of a population of close to 500,000 have returned is a place that will not be able to support its past grandeur for long. Who will wash these well-to-do people's Lexuses and clean their houses and serve their food at restaurants desperately in need of workers? I saw a sign at a local Burger King recently offering a $6,000 bonus to people willing to come to work there for a year. This certainly isn't the New Orleans I left a few months back.

A desperate sense of optimism permeates The Island. Blaring radio ads about how New Orleans is rebuilding and reinventing itself. The chancellor of my university has one such ad in high rotation on the city's most popular station. "This year, back to school means more than new hightops and laptops," he says in his best where y'at Nawlins drawl, upbeat jazz playing in the background. "In New Orleans it means things are getting back to normal. ... Hurricanes come and go, but an education is forever." The chancellor urges New Orleans citizens to register for spring semester, which begins on Jan. 30. He makes no mention that our campus is still closed down by the Environmental Protection Agency and that much of our infrastructure was damaged. But he can't. The University of New Orleans draws the vast majority of its students from the metro population, and if current returnee numbers hold, we won't have much of a university to speak of next year.

Talk circulates of our city turning into a "boutique town," a place of fancy clothing stores, fine eating establishments and trendy spas, not much bigger than Uptown and the central business district and the French Quarter. A clean version of the old New Orleans, a place where rents will double and the real estate market will prosper. Who needs the Ninth Ward and the Bywater?

But New Orleans, to many of those outside of the Garden District, is a city with soul created by a majority black population, culturally rich and fed by music and art and food of the African-American, the Caribbean and the Creole. It is this blithe indifference, this refusal on the part of so many of the wealthy, that infuriates some of my friends.

Yet this new optimism doesn't come out of nowhere. After Katrina and the ensuing evacuation of the city, crime has dropped to an all-time low. Only a handful of murders in the past months, when before a handful of murders was a regular weekend occurrence. Pre-Katrina, New Orleans faced a monstrous problem of blighted housing. Now, the city will be forced to do something about it. The Island has become a buzzing hive of activity. Outside labourers have poured in, many of them Latino, working long days to repair the houses of those who can afford it. In fact, so many Latin American workers have come to town in the past few months that supermarkets have begun stocking a variety of Mexican and Central American foods. Home Depot has now added Spanish translations underneath English signs in the store. A tent village of migrant labourers has sprung up in City Park, and the park charges a $300-a-month tent fee, and $5 a shot for a shower.

> Who will clean rich people's houses and wash their cars? Even Burger King offers a $6,000 signing bonus.

Indeed, the demographics of this city have changed drastically. Far fewer blacks, far more Latinos, a white population that is clearly a far higher percentage overall, far fewer women than men. But the strangest change is the lack of children. It used to be that when 3 p.m. came on a weekday, our streets filled with the shouts and laughter of students walking home in their uniforms. Now it's as if they've been banished. We've become an island of adults, trying desperately to put on our best face, all of us secretly wondering what will become of this place, if this place is even going to make it in the end.

The National Guard presence is dwindling, and more police seem to be out again. Mayor Ray Nagin declared our street, Magazine Street, the new hub of industry in New Orleans. The coffee shops and restaurants and clothing stores and Harry's Ace Hardware all seem to be doing pretty well. Not as well as during other holiday seasons, for sure, though they've got customers walking up and down Magazine. But as soon as dinnertime rolls around and the shoppers have gone home and the labourers have headed out of the city and back to Metairie and beyond, the quiet settles in, even in the new economic hub. The odd car drives down my street. The odd stranger strolls by. Night settles, and life retreats behind drawn shades.

DEAD CITY

My wife, Amanda, and I drive out to the Parkview Tavern in Mid-City on Monday night

PHOTOS BY RUTH CAFFERY

to meet with a few of our graduate students who've returned It's 9 p m , but it might as well be 2 in the morning as soon as we pass St Charles, heading down Washington Avenue St Charles is pretty much the shoreline of The Island as you head toward Lake Ponchartrain Soon as you cross, no more streetlights You have entered the sea of destruction that is the rest of New Orleans Dark houses list, their foundations shifted after sitting in eight feet of water for days and days Wreckage is strewn across lawns and sidewalks The odd boat still appears in our headlights, propped up on a fence now that the water's receded The black avenue stretches out before us Like driving into the beginning of a nightmare Not a soul on the once busy street A few houses completely demolished, so that it's difficult to imagine just what happened to them This used to be a dicey area, always a little discomforting to drive down at night, but now, with no humans around, it is far scarier

At the corner of Louisiana and Claiborne, a once thriving bus stop sits empty No power has been restored here, and so instead of stoplights, temporary stop signs have been erected It used to be a traffic choked crossroad Now even the stop signs don't seem necessary We are the only ones out here tonight, and curfew is still five hours away

We make a right on Jefferson Davis and head toward Bayou Saint John Mid City Black road The stars peek through the stripped oak limbs This road was still full of water when we tried to drive down it two weeks after the hurricane I wonder where all the people who used to live here have gone

The Parkview is bustling, though, and has, it seems, become a watering hole for quite a few of the new labourers in town Here, we're close to the tent village in City Park Men stare at Amanda and me as we walk in to order a drink Actually, they stare at the tall, pretty Amanda. The male-to-female ratio in town often feels about 10 to-1, especially in this place tonight

Monday night at the Parkview is a tradition with our students and us, something Amanda and I actually helped start years ago when we were graduate students A number of us sit at the picnic tables out front, even when the temperature drops as it does tonight, sipping on beer or the margarita specials, discussing writing and politics and music Not too many of us tonight The mood is a touth depressed

Our student Chrys, who, when he evacuated months ago to Denver and felt like a raisin in a bowl of milk, looks a little haggard. He's been evicted from his apartment because the landlady realized she can charge far more now that housing is in suth short supply And he wrecked his car a few days before



FREE PARKING On the city's side streets, freezers still perch in trees and cars rest on porches

while returning to the city Arin, who also sits with us, was forced to take a job as a bartender at a local strip club to pay for her dog's chemo The dog died anyway

We talk about the approaching spring semester, how it's starting two weeks later than normal Some of us are leaving for the holidays Some of us are staying Across what was once a busy Carrollton Avenue, we watch two raccoons chase each other up and down a palm tree To lighten the mood, I cross the road, not even worrying to check for oncoming traffic (there is none), and herd one of the raccoons back to our table, where it scrambles up an oak tree beside my students Arin isn't impressed She thinks it was a cruel thing to do to a poor raccoon On a pre-Katrina night, I'm sure I would have gotten laughs Not tonight

The next day, Amanda and I take another drive through the wrecked city Most of it looks just as we'd left it two weeks after Katrina A few more workers are trying to restore power or driving around But block after block is grey and leaning. Deserted Destroyed. Side streets are especially sad Fluorescent orange Xs marking doors like something from a Biblical Moses story Miles and miles of dead neighbourhoods, freezers in the lumbs of trees, cars up on porches, everything covered in a dry soap scum, so that it's easy to see how impossibly high the water rose Where have all these people gone?

Block after block of grey buildings still covered in what looks like soap scum. Where are all the people?





NEW HOUSING A tent city has sprung up for the migrant workers the French quarter (above)

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

JACQUELINE LARMA/AP (TOP); RUTH CAFFERY

My friend, a photographer named Ruth Caffery, invites me down to the St Bernard projects to meet a special man His name is Bruce Davenport, and he's the pastor of St John's #5 Faith Church It used to be St John's #5 Baptist Church, but Pastor Bruce began handing out condoms to youth in the neighbourhood in an attempt to battle an alarmingly high rate of teen pregnancy and HIV infection, and the Baptists didn't take kindly to that I want to meet him

We drive down Claiborne, underneath the I-10 overpass The median ground underneath this overpass is one long car graveyard Dead automobile after dead automobile lined up, hundreds and hundreds of them, all of them with the distinctive grey film up past their windows.

We turn down one more ruined street and Ruth points the way to a church mostly standing, the brow brick empty tenements of the St. Bernard housing project directly across from it No one on the street Not even any animals—all the strays have disappeared in the city, too We knock on Pastor Bruce's door beside the church and then knock again. Finally his door opens He's living on the second floor of what used to be his substance abuse centre The first floor took in many feet of water All of the four houses he and his flock purchased on this block years ago before they were slated to be torn down by the city took in a lot of water

Pastor Bruce is a bear of a man I soon realize he's the gentle kind He takes me door to door, to the academic enhancement house that provides literacy programs to the youth of these projects, to the counselling house next door that deals with HIV/AIDS and pregnancy prevention, to the cultural and social centre, to the computer technology centre, and to the substance abuse building All of them destroyed, black mould crawling up walls and furniture overturned, beds reeking of mildew and computers lying dead on the ground I can see what all of this once was And yet Pastor Bruce is upbeat, saying to me, "Thank you, thank you, I sure do appreciate you coming here," enough that I feel like a special ambassador bearing many gifts He's got a vision of rebuilding He says the people will come back I look around as he walks me to his church We're the only ones on the street as far down the road as we can see

"How many families lived in St Bernard before Katrina?" I ask

"Officially, 1,300 to 1,500 families Unofficially, far more than that Thousands of people Thousands"

"How many have returned?" We look around A question not worth answering

He takes me up the steps to his church on the second floor It, too, is ruined The roof

'People ask me if there's life after death,' says Pastor Bruce. 'Of course there is. I been to New Orleans!'

leaked badly and we can see daylight through the ceiling An organ and a pulpit sit on the stage up front. "People ask me if there's life after death," Pastor Bruce says as we look around "Yeah Of course there is I been to New Orleans!" His eyes sparkle, and for the moment, I believe he will rebuild.

The noise of a few trucks outside sends us to the door to see who it is. "Well, look at that!" Pastor Bruce says "The Red Cross" This is only the second time he's seen them since the hurricane hit in August "This surely is turning into a blessed day"

We flag the trucks down and they stop, a couple of young women and a couple of older men climbing out We exchange pleasantries, and Ruth, Bruce and I help them unload a few coolers full of bottled water, mops, handles, bleach and brooms and carry them up to the church This offering seems insubstantial and sad as I look around at the deserted project under a sombre sky, but I remind myself it's a start.

Before Ruth and I leave, we look at a few photos on the wall Immediately, I spot a former English student of mine, Charlene, smiling down at me "Pastor Bruce!" I say "I know her! She was one of my best students!"

"She runs our educational services," Pastor Bruce tells me. "She grew up here This is her home She'll be back"

As we are about to drive off, two white men in a white van pull up "Hey!" Pastor Bruce says. "This is more action than I've






DANCING IN THE STREETS The Original Prince of Wales 77th Second Line Parade brought jazz and rambling revelry back to the city

seen in months?" It turns out the men are volunteers with a non-religious organization called Common Ground Collective. They are helping the pastor get wireless Internet and other communications set up. "This surely has turned into a blessed day," Pastor Bruce says.

The sun comes out just as Ruth and I drive back onto The Island, into the French Quarter. We walk around for a while and note that the Quarter looks cleaner, and more empty, than we've seen it. We have lunch at the famous Napoleon House, back among the white people, the haves of this city. We've crossed into the other world of New Orleans again, the comfortable world.

SECOND LINE

"Leave your guns, dogs, and troubles at home," the flyer for the Original Prince of Wales 77th Second Line Parade announces. This Sunday afternoon is turning into a pretty New Orleans December day. Rebirth, our city's most famous brass band, leads a swelling wake of smiling, dancing people down Tchoupitoulas Avenue from Tipitina's. Mostly a black crowd, but there are plenty of white people, too, all of them shuffling and dancing and laughing as they follow the second line: the men in their brilliant white suits and bouncing umbrellas who follow the musicians with their trumpets, saxophones and sousaphone. The second line pauses at different bars along the route, the Rock Bottom Lounge, Purple Rain, and Charley Wright's Watering Hole. It's the kind of rambling party you don't want to end. The second line winds in and out of streets around my neighbourhood, hundreds following it, and I realize something: it pays no attention to the borders of The Island, crossing from inhabited area to blighted area and back again, weaving these blocks together as if there is no invisible border.

> 'Leave your guns, dogs, and troubles at home,' instructed the flyer for a December parade in New Orleans

Second lines sprung up decades ago from social and pleasure clubs in the city, groups of people, almost solely African American, with the shared purpose of bettering their communities, of helping one another. As the afternoon grows longer, I think of Pastor Bruce Davenport, the lone preacher left in a deserted and ruined housing project a few miles away from here.

The day Ruth and I visited Pastor Bruce, I asked him just before we left what it took to join a congregation like his. "We ain't like the others," he said. "If you believe and you want to take part, you're in."

Without thinking, I blurted, "I believe."

"Well, raise your right hand, then," he said. I did. And just like that, I'm now an honorary member of New Orleans' St. John's #5 Faith Church. Whoa. I guess now I've got to do something. M



AUSTRALIA: SQUISHY TOURISTS AHEAD

A British tourist is calling for warning signs on a sandy Australian island popular with four wheel-drive truck owners, after one drove over his head while he was sleeping. "The first set of tires went over me, I was like, 'oh what was that?'" said Scott Osbourne, who had camped out on Fraser Island. He tried to get up but the second set of tires drove over his head. He escaped with a broken shoulder and collapsed lung.

PHOTOS BY RUTH CAFFERY

Waiting for Goldilocks



STEVE MAICH

Maybe Norman Vincent Peale was right. If you want to make money, you just have to envision it. And pray.

In his renowned 1952 book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, author and preacher Norman Vincent Peale argued that with an optimistic attitude, and a lot of prayer, dreams and ambitions come true. Here's hoping he was right.

Optimism isn't much in fashion these days. Right now, mailboxes and newspapers are being inundated with annual market forecasts from every research firm on the planet. These reports are generally collections of "on the one hand, on the other hand" analysis, illustrated with charts and graphs for authority (i.e. interest rates are likely to stay low [see blue graph], unless high energy prices spark rising inflation, in which case they may go higher than expected [see red graph]).

Brokerage firms have perfected this style—muted confidence, tempered with just enough caution to keep the class action lawyers at bay. Those who bother to read them at all will likely come away as confused as before, hoping for the best while bracing for the worst. Canada's stock market has risen for the past three years running, and the experts say the chances of a fourth consecutive gain are slim. But maybe a good dose of irrepressible optimism is all that's needed to keep the good times rolling. After all, the bull market of the late '90s worked great as long as everybody was looking on the bright side. It wasn't until worry set in that everything went all to hell.

Maybe Norman Peale was right. If you want to make money, you have to envision it. It's worth a try. So, behold 2006: the year of the mythical "Goldilocks market." Not too hot, not too cold. Everybody gets enough to eat, and learns important lessons along the way.

At the heart of this sublime confluence are the central banks. Interest rates were on the rise in 2005, gradually tightening their grip on the indebted masses. But this year, rates will stabilize. Canada's David Dodge, and new U.S. Fed chairman Ben Bernanke, will find that elusive balance—easing off the economic gas just enough to keep inflation in check, without gutting consumers who've gotten into the habit of using credit cards to buy gum and newspapers. With interest rates around five per cent, give or take, the economy is declared to be "in balance." Consumers celebrate by buying a new energy-efficient appliance, hybrid car and a third computer.

This, of course, also means the real estate market will not implode as feared. House prices will settle down slightly as borrowing costs gradually inch higher, but will not collapse. And so, 2006 will be the year everybody stops talking about the real estate "bubble" and switches instead to less-frightening adjectives like "frothy."

Canada's stock market will continue to rise, as resource and energy stocks benefit from the continued growth in Asia. Gas prices themselves, however, will moderate as energy speculators—spooked by building North American gasoline stockpiles and the outbreak of peace in the Middle East—sell oil futures. Canadians will adjust to the idea that gas for 80 cents a litre is cheap, and stop crying for a bigger share of Alberta's oil windfall.

In the United States, the economy will keep humming along, and the White House will rediscover fiscal prudence just in time to calm jittery world currency markets, reining in the budget and trade deficits, and shoring up the U.S. dollar. That, in turn, will put a cap on the rise in the Canadian dollar and provide some welcome relief for Canada's manufacturing sector and support for the booming jobs market.

Google will press ahead at dizzying speed, liberalizing the flow of information around the world to everyone, anytime, anywhere... as long as they have broadband Internet access. Its stock price will double, then double again, proving that the New Economy really does work on different laws of economics after all. Disgraced Internet analysts who lost their jobs in the bear market of 2001 will re-emerge to say "I told you so," and all will be forgiven.

After years of careful consideration, the federal government will unanimously pass rules allowing Canadian banks to merge. Canadians will suffer no ill effects as the Big Five become the Big Three. Stocks rise, service improves, fees decline. Everybody forgets what the fuss was about.

Hudson's Bay Co. will be sold to American financier Jerry Zucker, who'll breathe new life into the brand while maintaining all the most important aspects of its Canadian identity. Moved by this country's enthusiastic embrace, Zucker will relocate north, apply for Canadian citizenship, and learn of the enormous joy that only poutine and good beer can provide.

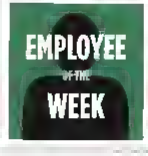
There's more fantastic stuff ahead no doubt, but before the party gets too out of hand, a note of caution (remember the lawyers). It is possible, just *possible*, things could go the other way. China's stampeding growth could trigger rising energy prices and inflation, leading to a spike in interest rates, the collapse of the housing market, a crash in consumer confidence, and recession. A surge in bankruptcies and another rash of corporate scandals could devastate Bay Street and scupper investor confidence. The bottom could fall out of the U.S. dollar, devastating Canada's manufacturers and putting tens of thousands out of work.

It's worth remembering that Norman Peale died in 1993. As John Maynard Keynes said, in the long run we're all dead. So, you know, positive thinking may be useful, but it only gets you so far.

Now, banish those worries. Keep smiling. Keep buying. And never ever ask, "What's the worst that could happen?" M



CANADIAN ICON Don't despair over the fate of the Bay. Jerry Zucker will soon be a Canuck.



FORKLIFT HERO UNAPPRECIATED, BUT UNBOWED

Ashmead Khan of San Juan, Trinidad, should have been hailed as a hero. When a platform on which his young boss was driving a forklift collapsed in the warehouse of International Cosmetics Ltd., Khan pushed him to safety. But the forklift fell on Khan, causing severe injuries. The company later fired Khan because he missed work owing to the injuries. Khan sued for negligence and late last month he won. Damages will be awarded next month.

TECH SURVIVORS—OLDER, WISER, BACK IN ACTION

Ottawa's technology industry has learned some hard lessons from the go-go years of the boom. A new wave of entrepreneurs is securing venture capital, creating jobs and making money.

BY MICHAEL SNIDER • When Brian Hurley got his management group together at his house a week before Christmas 2003, it was to make the toughest decision any entrepreneurs can face: whether to kill their nascent tech company. Hurley, the CEO of Ottawa-based Liquid Computing Corp., unplugged the blinking lights of the Christmas tree, plugged in a borrowed digital projector, and shone a hand-drawn "mind map" onto the dining room wall. Looking like a spider web, the map was supposed to depict the myriad paths of a successful business plan. Trouble was, most of the paths had turned out to be dead ends.

Joining Hurley at the table was Mike Kemp, Liquid's co-founder and chief technology officer, and Sylvio Bisson and Willi Lotz, experts in digital and mechanical system design. To a man, they were casualties of big Ottawa tech cutbacks in the wake of the dot-com implosion. Hurley, from North Bay, Ont., had spent 18 years with Nortel Networks Corp. Kemp, a Londoner, was a 20-year Nortel veteran and Bisson, an 18-year one. Lotz, the odd man out, spent 20 years with Mitel Networks Corp. before a stint with Newbridge Networks Inc. None of them had expected that after years of service to some of the country's most highly touted companies, they'd find themselves in Hurley's Hunt Club home trying to breathe life into a start-up. Their idea was to build supercomputers, and they had a radical plan to revolutionize the business, too. But even revolutionary ideas need funding, and in the throes of the meltdown, investors were scarce.

'THEY'RE SATISFYING THE NEEDS OF THEIR CUSTOMERS AND INVESTORS—THINGS THAT WEREN'T NECESSARILY ALIGNED BACK IN THE TECH BOOM'

Such was life in the Ottawa area's high-tech sector in 2003. The burst bubble and subsequent crash had knocked the city for a loop. Multinationals like Nortel, JDS Uniphase, Alcatel and Mitel—which combined had employed nearly half of the region's 80,000 high-tech workers—shed bodies faster than a plague ship. In all, 30,000 people found themselves out of work between 2001 and 2004, according to the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation (OCRI), a local business development group.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the unemployment line. Talented and well-connected professionals like Hurley and Kemp turned their misfortune into opportunity by launching start-ups with their pick of some of the smartest minds in the business. Many of the city's new firms filled their rosters with proven all-stars, dumped by industry heavyweights when the bubble burst. "I look at the people I have and there's no way I could have brought them together at any other time," says Hurley. "They would be the key guys on 10 different teams. There's no way in 1999 we'd even get these guys to listen to us."

The net result is, Ottawa has become a city of entrepreneurs, where those small and medium-sized businesses have led a resurgence in the high-tech sector. The entire tech economy, in fact, has restructured itself over the past five years, rebuilding on a firmer foundation. As a result, the total number of Ottawa tech companies has grown from 1,000 at the beginning of the decade to more than 1,700 today, and they are hiring. Employment is nearing its 2001 peak of 79,000. Equally important, venture capital is also picking up. Since the crash, each year has seen a decline in investment, from $1.26 billion in 2000 to $190 million in 2004. But last year witnessed a turnaround, with deals topping $284 million.

Thinking about it now in his company's slick offices on March Road overlooking the Marshes golf course—Liquid has some 75 employees and more than $20 million in raised financing—Hurley seems well-removed from the doom and gloom of 2003. After nearly a year of nothing but rubbles from investors, the group met on that pivotal night before Christmas and agreed to take one more shot at finding local investors for seed funding. It worked, and since then, they've been running flat out. "The amount of blood and guts they expended is remarkable," says Pat DiPietro, a managing partner with VenGrowth private equity partners, one of the first firms to invest in Liquid. "Especially in the early days when there was no money. It was very arduous."

Today's Ottawa has learned some hard lessons from the go-go years of the tech boom. Back then, the boneheaded belief that the New Economy operated by different rules had investors lusting after tech stocks. Companies marvelled at the bottomless well of venture capital, flowing like so much champagne at an IPO. At industry fairs, companies with flimsy business plans asked for $50 million or $100 million in seed financing—and got it. Newbridge Networks was sold to France-based Alcatel SA for $10.4 billion; the Nasdaq hit 5,000, Nortel hit $124.50 a share. The bubble grew and Ottawa became Canada's high-tech wonderland.

The gold-rush mentality made a few Ottawa companies the equivalent of overnight rock stars, and executives behaved as such. Mac Brown, majority owner of Rebel.com, which built computer hardware and went from $1 million in annual revenue to $40 million in a few years, would entertain hundreds at his 12,000-sq.-foot Manotick, Ont., mansion. It was not unknown for the big-spending Brown to host afternoon parties at which certain exotic guests would strip and frolic in the indoor pool, much to the shock of tech executives and other guests.

Even at the start of 2001, nine months after the meltdown began, headlines still proclaimed the city's economy safe and secure. In retrospect, that was just an echo of the irrational hype that buoyed the tech bubble through the late 1990s, like a drunk straggler shouting for another round long after the lights have come on. "There was some craziness back then," says Jeffery Dale, CEO of the OCRI. "There was a real buzz that we were seeing a mild setback and things were going to improve. We actually held an event in late 2000—after the crash—called TechnoStrut. We had a big ball at the Westin Hotel and celebrated how fantastic the tech sector was."

That bravado was fuelled in part by the fact that the behemoths behind the boom were still relatively unscathed, including Canada's New Economy poster boy, Nortel. In the late '90s, Nortel equipment handled 75 per cent of Internet traffic, and in 2000, it bought 11 companies for more than $19 billion. Even eight months after the crash, then-CEO John Roth declared 2001 would be a year of solid growth. Nortel had become the shining jewel in the Ottawa Valley, where the company's R & D centre was located.

It took some time for the tech tsunami to travel from the epicentre in California's Silicon Valley, but when the shock wave hit, it hit hard. By April 2001, a year after the crash, JDS stock had fallen 85 per cent. Nortel had lost $325 billion off its market value and its share price was falling like a stone. The decline dragged the TSE below 8,000 for the first time in more than 15 months, and the system suspended trading six times in early 2001 because it couldn't handle the volumes.

Ottawa became a mess. The beleaguered companies responded by slashing jobs. Nortel, which at its peak had employed 80,000 people, cut a total of 45,000 jobs worldwide, with an estimated 9,000 in Ottawa. "It was a difficult time," says the OCRI's Dale.

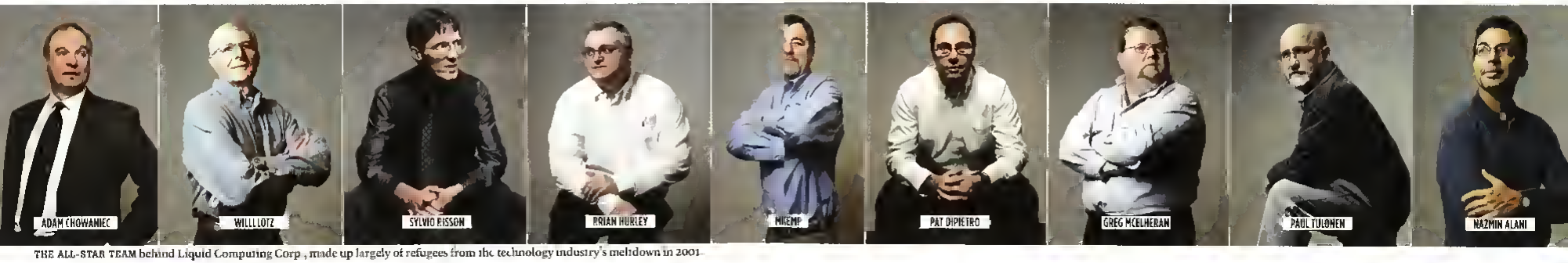
While venture capitalists might confess that, collectively, they contributed to the feeding frenzy of the Internet bubble, they've now learned their lesson and have returned to the practice of funding companies that back up enticing ideas with strong business plans, a quality product, and solid management. Take BelAir Networks Inc., for example. It builds wireless mesh networks—umbrellas of wireless access that allow people with laptops or smart phones access to the Internet from anywhere. BelAir has set up networks along Ottawa's Elgin Street, at the famous Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, and most recently, the city of Waterloo. But what BelAir does isn't as impressive as how the company has positioned itself in a very healthy sector of telecommunications. Headed by industry vet Bernard Herscovic, who worked for Nortel and Newbridge through the mid- and late '90s, BelAir managed to grow in an extremely tough environment.

Taking a lesson from the glory days when start-ups would spout off expectations and then fail to meet them, BelAir kept its plan quiet, even after receiving its first injection of capital funding in late 2002. The company kept a low profile for more than a year until it was ready to roll out its first product, and could back up its lofty claims with something tangible. Those efforts have made the company a favourite of industry analysts. "BelAir, I think, is an example of a management team that is well seasoned, in a very interesting technology space, which over the next five years is going to grow rapidly," says Todd Coupland, an analyst with CIBC World Markets. "They're doing it in the right way. They're satisfying the needs of their customers and investors—things that weren't necessarily aligned back in the tech boom."

'WE ACTUALLY HELD A BIG BALL IN LATE 2000—AFTER THE CRASH—CALLED TECHNOSTRUT AND CELEBRATED HOW FANTASTIC THE TECH SECTOR WAS'

BelAir sold 16 networks in 2004 and 100 in 2005. In October, the company announced it had landed US$20 million in new financing from the investment arm of Comcast, the biggest cable company in the U.S., bringing total investment to around US$45 million. Now, Herscovic says, the company is looking to go public "four or five quarters from now."

And that's what Ottawa needs to firmly get back onto its feet—a steadily growing number of success stories. One good sign has come from March Networks Inc., a Terry Matthews start-up that builds video surveillance equipment. March went public last spring—the first Ottawa IPO since 1999—and has returned impressive results. Certainly, a full recovery will require the healthy participation of the big guys, too. A profitable quarter from Nortel or Mitel would help. But until then, the sector will have to rely on the little guys, and that might not be a bad thing. "These companies have seasoned executives who've gone through the boom-bust of the tech bubble and have built a nice list of credible, well-financed and profitable private tech companies that are very likely going to be the next generation of public companies over the next few years," says CIBC's Coupland. "It's all very encouraging." M



THE ALL-STAR TEAM behind Liquid Computing Corp., made up largely of refugees from the technology industry's meltdown in 2001

PHOTOS BY TOBIN GRIMSHAW



What's on your mind?

Introducing the all-new **canada** com – your best way to connect ond interact with Conada. Finolly there's o site where you con not only get the news, but comment on it as well. With our new community forums, you con porticipole in the notionol diologue like never before. Tell Conodo your perspective on the oll-new **canada** com.

Of course, there's more to **canada** com thon community forums. Now you get more news, more video ond more feotures – like city guides, event & restauront listings, in-depth body & health information ond tools to help you plon and book your next vocotion. And with o whole new look, our totally revomped site mokes getting oround and finding whot you need easier than ever.

So check out the all-new **canada** com ond discover first-hand whot you won't be missing.

Introducing the all-new

canada.com
WHERE PERSPECTIVES CONNECT

EDUCATION

YOU HAVE HATE MAIL

Cyberbullying is on the rise. Who can stop it?

BY CHARLIE GILLIS • Standing up to the schoolyard bully sounds good in theory but, for the truly meek, hustling onto the bus after the bell always seemed the wiser option. In the age of camera phones and chat rooms, however, when bullying occurs via blogs and text messages, evasion has become all but obsolete. Getting a decent lawyer may be a better strategy.

This, at least, seems to be the lesson from Chicago, where teachers and education bureaucrats are grappling with the growing phenomenon of "cyberbullying"—using electronic messaging to ostracize, threaten and harass an individual. Three teenagers were suspended from Taft High School last month for posting obscene and threatening remarks about teachers—such as a desire to slit one's throat "like a chicken"—on their personal weblogs. In issuing the penalties, the school's administrators were in line with a U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding a school board's power to limit students' rights to free expression in favour of school safety.

The case raises troubling questions. If a kid sends offensive material from his bedroom computer, what right do school authorities have to intervene? And on a purely practical level, is it possible to nab bullies and mischief-makers in the miasma of cyberspace?

These questions are equally relevant in Canada, where incidents have become both more frequent and severe since cyberbullying first came to light a few years ago, notes Bill Belsey, the education consultant in Cochrane, Alta., who coined the term and now runs a website with information on cyberbullying. In one prominent case, students in Burlington, Ont., created a site dedicated entirely to humiliating a 17-year-old classmate, David Knight, by branding him a pedophile and bombarding him with hateful emails. And in a study released last year, one-quarter of Grade 7 students in two Alberta schools said they'd been bullied via the Net. As more youngsters acquire cellphones with text-messaging capabilities, the number of cyberbullying cases increases.

Some victims and their families turn to the courts because they feel there's no other way to fight back. Internet service providers have long resisted being censors, while police are powerless to act until the abuse reaches the level of death threats or criminal harassment. The Knight family grew so frustrated they finally sued their school system for failing to protect them from four years of "harassment, abuse, humiliating and degrading treatment and bullying." Claiming defamation is another option. But as David Potts, a Toronto lawyer who specializes in online libel cases, points out, the law may be too blunt an instrument in many cases. "It's not going to do what you want, which is to get the behaviour to stop."

In an Alberta survey of Grade 7 students, fully one-quarter said they had been bullied via the Internet

In the end, Canadian schools may be in the best position to fight online harassment—and Canadian courts, historically even more attentive than their American counterparts to the need for safety and order, would likely back them up, notes Richard Rosenberg, professor emeritus of computer science at the University of British Columbia, who has studied the interplay of online communication, free speech and privacy.

Schools could start, experts say, by updating rules written before kids had computers in their bedrooms. Most so-called acceptable use policies were designed to discourage misuse of school networks, Belsey notes, where teenagers now spend a mere fraction of their time online. He's urging school boards to rewrite their policies to include *all* Internet use—in class, at home and over their cellphones. The deals might not be legally enforceable, he acknowledges, "but the more you bring parents on-board with issues like this, the more inclined they are to talk with their kids, to convince them that access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right." M

charlie.gillis@macleans.rogers.com



STICKS AND STONES | Is a lawsuit the best way to deal with cyber tormentors?

GETTY IMAGES

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

LESSON IN U.S. CIVICS: DON'T PLAY BY THE RULES

Manual Bartsch, a German-born student in Ohio, expected U.S. immigration officials to help him stay in the United States until he completes high school next summer. Bartsch had come to the U.S. with a German guardian when he was a small boy. Recently, his guardian returned to Europe, leaving Manual to complete his studies. But instead of helping, authorities threw him jail. Said a spokesman: "We don't have the luxury of circumventing the law."

Healer to the stars

Michael Ondaatje, Sophia Loren and Anthony Minghella all swear by Xiaolan Zhao

BY BARBARA RIGHTON • In the cramped waiting room of Xiaolan Zhao's Toronto clinic, boxes of herbs vie for space with stacks of old-fashioned file folders. Nothing is high-tech here. Patients sit on mismatched, straight-backed chairs waiting for acupuncture or massage, specially brewed herbal tea and the application of various unnamed unguents. Helen, the receptionist, keeps up a friendly banter punctuated by incessant phone calls. "She sees a lot of cancer patients," Helen explains. Doctors, too. Not to mention a glittering array of international and homegrown celebrities. Sophia Loren, novelists Ann-Marie MacDonald, Michael Ondaatje and Susan Swan, British filmmaker Anthony *(The English Patient, Cold Mountain)* Minghella, and Roots honcho Michael Budman have all been clients.

> 'A treatment makes me feel as if the weight of the world has been lifted from my shoulders'

Budman, 59, has faithfully gone to Xiaolan twice a week, every week, for the past two years. (Budman's wife, Diane Bald, introduced them—she heard about Xiaolan from a girlfriend). Even Budman's 90-year-old mom comes up from Michigan once a month to go. "I wasn't sold the first time," Budman says, "but the more I went, the better I felt. And you should see my mother! She has never looked better!" Budman mainly gets an acupuncture/massage combo from Xiaolan ("They go together like peanut butter and jelly"), and he swears that whenever he has a cold or feels tired, his treatment turns him right around.

As receptionist Helen chats, staffers quietly come and go, signalling patients with a gentle tap on their shoulders. "Don't I get to see Xiaolan?" one woman whines—the healer is widely known by her first name alone. "I wanted to see Xiaolan." But no. This revered practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine, or TCM, is going to see me.

It will be my first exposure. But millions of Canadians already think of TCM as a welcome holistic adjunct to Western medicine. In 2003, according to Statistics Canada, 3.3 million Canadians used alternative health care—including acupuncturists, homeopaths and herbalists—to treat back pain, migraines, and arthritis. Cedric Cheung, president of the Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Association of Canada, boasts an accredited membership of 1,600. When he began the organization in 1983, it was 100.

What's more, Cheung notes that TCM, once considered "witchcraft," is now recognized by the World Health Organization. Does it actually cure the things that ail us? "Some diseases we definitely can cure," says Cheung. "With others, we can relieve the misery." Xiumei Wu, head of the Toronto School of Traditional Chinese Medicine (which offers a five-year program), notes TCM "treats many diseases with a minimum of side effects."

Minghella first heard of Xiaolan five years ago from his friend Ondaatje, and has kept in touch ever since, recently inviting her to London to see his production of Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*. It was a working trip. Xiaolan treated his entire family during her stay. Novelist Swan, meanwhile, has consulted Xiaolan for back pain and perimenopausal symptoms. "A treatment with her," she says, "makes me feel as if the weight of the world has been lifted from my shoulders."

For the uninitiated, Xiaolan provides an explanation of TCM in her new book, *Reflections of the Moon on Water* (Random House Canada). She gives recipes for age-old curatives like herbal chicken soup, and a section on TCM and sexuality. In her native China, she writes, TCM and Western medicine are working hand in hand. As an indicator of such acceptance here, she cites a 2004 National Institutes of Health study that found patients with arthritis in their knees showed a 40-per-cent decrease in pain and an equal increase in mobility when treated with acupuncture—which brings me to my left knee.

After a brief consultation with Xiaolan (during which she felt my pulse and rightly diagnosed a number of maladies—insomnia, stomach upset and a mad desire to go back to smoking), she had a close look at my puffy kneecap. "Have you ever had acupuncture?" she asked. "No, but one of my horses did," I said. "Ahh, you take better care of your animals than you do yourself." Bingo. In one treatment, my knee was better. "One hundred per cent!" I enthused. "No," Xiaolan said patiently, "80 per cent."

It's this air of kindness and authority that so many rarefied folk find appealing (Budman says Angelica Huston plans to go the next time she's in town). For Minghella, a big part of the draw is the fact that she's "at once kind, holistic and wise. She heals with a hug." M



NO LONGER WITCHCRAFT | Xiaolan's fame reflects the rise of traditional Chinese medicine

PHOTO BY SANDY NICHOLSON

TONICS

THE CURE FOR SCURVY MAKES A COMEBACK

The bleeding associated with chronic gum disease can be improved by eating two grapefruits a day. A study by Germany's Friedrich Schiller University found that eating grapefruit reduced bleeding in 58 individuals with chronic gum disease, a condition particularly prevalent among smokers. Researchers found that the Vitamin C in grapefruit was especially beneficial to smokers, whose bodies have, on average, lower levels of the nutrient.

INTERNET GUIDE

Campus Retail Canada
campusretail.com

CRC Campus Retail Canada

Campus Retail Canada is an organization of over 30 campus computer stores across Canada owned and operated by their University or College. Visit campusretail.com for products, promotions and member schools

Elliot Lake Retirement Living
Canada's most affordable retirement community
1-800-461-4663

ELLIOT LAKE retirement living

Apartments from $399/month
Townhouses from $482/month
Houses from $512/month

For more information or to book your *Discovery Tour* call 1-800-461-4663. Visit us on the web at www.retireelliotlake.com

Baffin Island Icebreaker Expedition
August 2 to 17, 2006



Explore the Inuit Art Capital of the World with Ingo Hessel, internationally renowned specialist. Visit www.eldertreks.com for details



Paul DioGuardi, Queen's Counsel
Tax Lawyer
(40 Years Experience)
1-877-2PARDON / 416-657-4408
604-678-8559

PAY ONLY 2.5% TAX

Outsource internationally to maximize profits. We can help you structure all or part of your business to legally pay only 2.5% corporate tax. Profits can be repatriated tax free to Canada. Alternatively, using the Turks & Caicos, defer or never pay taxes.
www.effectivetaxsolutions.com

DVD rentals delivered to your home.
No late fees.
No due dates.
No hassles.

zip.ca Unlimited Entertainment

Renting DVDs online — it just doesn't get any easier than that. With more than 38,000 titles to choose from, Zip.ca delivers Canada's largest selection of DVDs right to your mailbox.

JOIN TODAY AT
www.zip.ca or call 1-888-422-4830

Paul DioGuardi, Queen's Counsel
Tax Lawyer (40 Years Experience)
Formerly Tax Counsel
Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)
1-877-2PARDON / 416-657-4408 / 604-678-8559



TAX AMNESTY

Undeclared income, failure to file/late filing? Improper Tax/Financial Planning?

Avoid criminal prosecution and civil penalties. Before you are caught, we can negotiate a no name (anonymous) settlement. Lawyer-client confidentiality assured. Unlike us, your accountant cannot offer this legal protection and can be forced by the CRA to testify against you. A substantially discounted tax settlement is possible.

CAN'T SEE US IN PERSON?
To consult with us on undeclared income and failure to file matters, please go to www.taxamnesty.ca, our secure, encrypted site.

BRING YOUR MONEY HOME
Offshore tax havens are no longer safe!
The names of trust beneficiaries, debit/digital e-money cards, IBC owners and stock traders are being given to the tax police. Before you are contacted we can negotiate a confidential tax settlement for you. Don't leave the problem to your family if sickness or death intervenes.
Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria and offshore

UNLIKE US, ACCOUNTANTS CANNOT PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY!



Acid-related diseases are real diseases with underlying biological causes. Many people suffer in silence with their symptoms for far too long because they aren't aware that their condition can be effectively treated.

TREATMENT IS AVAILABLE
For more information visit
www.yourdigestivehealth.ca

James Houston: Celebrating a Life



Join us aboard the M/S Explorer from Iqaluit to Cape Dorset as we honour an artist and author who encouraged Inuit to speak for themselves through their art and captured their voices in his books and art. Join his son, documentary filmmaker John Houston, and Inuit art icon Kenojuak Ashevak. September 9 - 14, 2006. From $1,599, tax incl. Air extra.
www.adventurecanada.com
1-800-363-7566

ROCKY MOUNTAINEER Vacations

Experience "The Most Spectacular Train Trip in the World"®

Rocky Mountaineer Vacations provides unique year-round vacation packages to the most scenic regions of Canada, including travel through the Canadian Rockies on the world acclaimed Rocky Mountaineer® rail journey. This year, experience the Fraser Discovery Route and our new Whistler Mountaineer train.

WHISTLER MOUNTAINEER

PREMIERING IN 2006

Experience the Whistler Mountaineer, a three-hour train journey between North Vancouver and the world-class resort of Whistler, BC.

1-800-665-7245
www.rockymountaineer.com
www.whistlermountaineer.com



A TOWN DIVIDED On one side of the rift stand the township council and the volunteer firefighters. On the other side is the ratepayers association.

FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE

The defamation suit against Donald Page is a rare case of a government suing its own citizen. It's also the finale of a strange and bitter feud in an Ontario town.

BY NICHOLAS HÖHLER • Donald Page and his wife, Jean Purcell, saw the column of black smoke rising from 121 Riceville Rd. early on the morning of Dec. 12, 2004. It was a Sunday, and they were on their way to do some Christmas shopping in nearby Smiths Falls, a town southwest of Ottawa where people still angle-park on the main street. Instead, the couple pulled off Matheson Drive and arrived at the burning house just as Ron Hunt and his wife, Andrea, stopped in their sedan. It was the Hunts who called 911, alerting the Montague Township volunteer fire department. Page and Purcell, meanwhile, approached the burning home, freeing a dog trapped by the flames. The firemen ordered the couple back to the street, where they stood watching the blaze. Later, inside the gutted house, authorities uncovered the body of 68-year-old dog breeder Danae Vassilounis, dead of smoke inhalation, along with the corpses of 10 Pekingese. These facts are not disputed.

Some weeks after the fire, Page, a 76-year-old retired electrical engineer who wears a Vandyke beard, wrote the township council a letter that was critical of the volunteer fire department and the way it had handled the situation. He copied it to the Ontario Fire Marshal and the Town of Smiths Falls, which also dispatched firefighters that morning. The Montague men, Page wrote, were undertrained and ill-equipped to handle the blaze, and did not make appropriate efforts to enter the home. Fires in the west end of the township should be handled by the adjoining Smiths Falls service, he argued, adding, "If this arrangement had been in place, the Vassilounis house might not have been completely destroyed and there may even have been a life saved."

A week later, Gary Doyle, reeve of Montague Township, sent Page his reply. "Your letter clearly amounts to legal slander," he wrote, mistaking slander, the spoken form of defamation, for libel, which is written. The letter, dated Jan. 13, 2005, gave Page two weeks to provide Montague Township with a "written apology and a retraction" and further demanded that Page forward copies of the same to the Ontario Fire Marshal and Smiths Falls—"failing which we will commence immediate legal action." Page refused and instead crunked out a series of letters that he copied to increasingly high-ranking Ontario government officials. He also sent a letter to the local newspaper. In August, Montague Township filed a $50,000 defamation suit against Page, alleging in a statement of claim that he had embarked upon a "campaign of wilful vilification" and that his letters contained "innuendo"—that the members of the Montague Fire Service were poorly trained, ill-equipped to carry out their duties, and in fact on the occasion of the Riceville fire, were responsible for a fatality." Said Jean Purcell, Page's wife: "That's not innuendo. That's in-your-face-o."

So began a battle that's drawn lawyers and media to a small corner of eastern Ontario. At issue is the potentially chilling effect of a government using a defamation suit to muzzle one of its own citizens, an almost unprecedented gambit in Canadian law. Simmering behind the legal machinations, however, is a long-standing feud, one laced with rumours of intimidation—and even murder.

Donald Page's first appearance in court took place last month—the Thursday before Christmas—in Perth, Ont. His lawyer asked Justice Kenneth Pedlar to dismiss the suit. The gallery, reminiscent of classic Hollywood courtrooms a la *To Kill a Mockingbird*, was packed with townspeople, mainly beef farmers eager to hear the big city lawyers' abstruse arguments for and against Page. It was, for many, their first time in a courtroom and some asked when it was appropriate to stand. "We're all simple country folk," said Lois Bennett, a farmer's wife and the president of the Montague Ratepayers Association, which had appealed to the community to help finance Page's legal fees. Members organized bake sales. Page, meanwhile, had to refinance his house, which incensed a number of residents. "They're using the tax dollars of everyone sitting around this table to attack one of their own," said Randy Hillier, president of the Lanark Landowners Association. "What's that called? I think it's called cannibalism." A retired teacher sitting in the gallery shook his head. What did he think of the township's $50,000 suit? "I'm afraid to say in case I defame them," said the man, Walter Brown. He gestured around the courtroom. "What you are seeing is just the tip of the iceberg," he said. If you heard the whole story, promised another Page supporter, Mary Yellen, "you'd think, 'Where do I go to see the movie?' "

It is not the case that Montague Township's defamation suit against Page has split the community of 3,100. Montague Township has been divided for some time. "It's like back in the '30s in the hills of Tennessee," Bennett, the farmer's wife, said. On one side of the rift stands the Montague Ratepayers Association, founded some 18 months ago by residents who believed the township required a watchdog. On the other side stand the township council and the Montague volunteer fire department. Many in Montague believe the councillors have given the firefighters too much sway within the community. During training sessions, the firemen are said to drink beer. "Some guys don't give a shit," said Steve Larkin, a former volunteer who left the service in disgust after the Riceville fire and recalls nights of Molson, Coors and rye. "They're there just because it's the good old boys club—somewhere to hang out every Wednesday night and get away from the wives."

The volunteer firemen are said to enjoy special perks. In his ramshackle home, Gordon Gladden threw a videotape into his VCR claiming it showed a fireman—his neighbour—clearing his land with a township-owned tractor. "I don't think it's right—if they can use it, why can't we?" asked Gladden as the tractor rumbled across his TV screen. Reeve Doyle and Ron Haskins, chief of the fire department, denied the allegations. "Bullshit," Haskins said, adding: "You be careful what you print."

Hovering behind the current municipal brouhaha is the spectre of Debra Himmelman, a 49-year-old mother of four. Himmelman had been active in school-board politics before she began challenging council in the autumn of 2003. At one council meeting, she stood and voiced her concerns, directing her complaints at Montague's volunteer fire service. At the next council meeting, the spectators' gallery—usually empty—was crowded with firefighters. The experience led Himmelman to help form the ratepayers and become its interim president in the spring of 2004. Three months later, she disappeared. Searchers discovered her body lying face down by the railway tracks not far from her home. The homicide has yet to be solved. Kathleen Lang, a Montague school-bus driver who had campaigned unsuccessfully for council in 2003, said the slaying convinced her not to run again. "Debbie was another person who spoke out—and somebody offed her," she said.

Page joined the ratepayers as spokesman after Himmelman's death, effectively replacing her. (He has since taken a leave of absence.) "There is a recent history of intimidation and worse in the Montague fire department," Page wrote in one of his letters, dated April 21 and copied to, among others, Monte Kwinter, Ontario's minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. In it he noted the founding of the ratepayers and Himmelman's mysterious death. Timothy Ray, the lawyer representing Montague Township, read the passage out loud for the judge last month. "What's that supposed to mean?" he said. Later Ray admitted the township's suit is an easy target. Doyle said they were surprised by the heavy media interest. "I thought it was a local issue," he said. Yet Ray repeated the arguments he'd made before the judge, saying Canadian courts must curb "irresponsible" criticism of government. "We're beating the shit out of our politicians," he said. "It's become a sport—a blood sport."

Governments rarely sue individuals for defamation. "In most situations it's not a good political move," said Ryder Gilliland, a Toronto lawyer who has represented the *Toronto Star* and the *Washington Post* in defamation suits and who appeared in Perth as a representative of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. The last known Canadian case dates back to 1979—several years before the introduction of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which Page's lawyers believe protects him. There is one other current case, involving a man in Halton Hills, Ont. "The law in Canada isn't there yet—we're hoping to put it there," said Gilliland, who is representing the Halton Hills man. In his submissions, Gilliland argued that governments "should be open to uninhibited criticism."

Justice Pedlar, who presided over the proceedings, looked down at the mound of documents submitted by the lawyers. "I might need a front-end loader ro lug this stuff out of here," he said. A decision is expected from him next month. As the gallery rose, Doyle told a reporter council had no choice but to launch the suit against Page, who he said had been circulating his letters within the community. An investigation into the Riceville fire by the provincial fire marshal, he noted, deemed Montague's fire department's conduct proper. "The fact is that we have people that work for us, they're volunteers, they do a great job for us and I believe we have a responsibility to protect their integrity and their own individual rights," said Doyle. "These are great people and they shouldn't be subjected to this." In the courthouse lobby, members of the ratepayers awaited Doyle's arrival. Dianne Coates, a petite brunette, cornered him. "I want to know what the costs are," she said, her voice raised. "What are the legal costs?" Doyle muttered something. "We are funding this lawsuit," Coates said. Doyle pushed through the courthouse doors. M



DEFAMER OR DISSENTER? Defendant Page

> 'They're using the tax dollars of everyone sitting around this table to attack one of their own. I think it's called cannibalism.'

THE SMITHS FALLS RECORD-NEWS PHOTO BY PETER SHEGA/MACLEAN'S

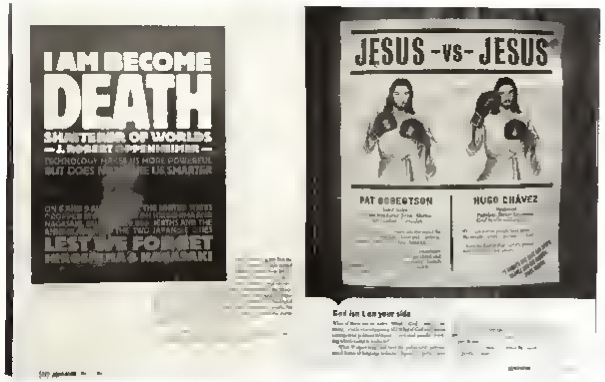
WHO'S SUING WHOM

LACKING A BODY OF EVIDENCE

The family of George Erhardt is suing the Bohemian National Cemetery in Chicago, alleging it has lost the petrierch's remains. Although George died in 1981, the family didn't know he was missing until 2003 when his wife, Dolores, died and was to be buried next to him in the Marble Room. No George. No answers, either. The Erhardt family's lawyer says that for two years, the cemetery's staff has refused to answer questions about where George is.

'JESUS IS MY HOMEY'

A magazine tries to make Christianity hip for the kids



CALLING ALL ATHEISTS, Bhuddists and others—this magazine, says its founder, is for you, too

BY GLORIA KIM • "We're unapologetically Christian," says Will Braun, managing editor of the new Christian magazine *Geez*. "And sometimes that's a hard thing to be." He pauses. "But we're also anti-Christian. Or what passes for Christianity these days, like George W. Bush introducing God as a major player in geopolitics and the sort of big box religions that sell lattes in the back of their mega-churches."

Describing itself as a "cheeky new magazine of spirit and social action," Winnipeg-based *Geez* is a surprisingly hip, bold take on Christianity. It hearkens back not to any recent tradition of right-wing fundamentalism, but to Christianity's roots of social change and revolution, with Jesus as a rebel protesting against the Establishment and taking his message to the streets and the harlots, poor and dispossessed who dwell there. The magazine is the brainchild of former *Adbusters* managing editor Aiden Enns, 44, he's assisted by Will Braun, 32, a market gardener and bicycle evangelist. As the name implies, they aim to put the "geez" into Jesus, creating what they call "holy mischief in an age of fast faith."

In the Bush era, Christianity may not have the mystical chic of Kabbalah or Tibetan Buddhism, with their celeb devotees Madonna and Richard Gere. But *Geez* is a stylish magazine in the tradition of *Adbusters* or *Mother Jones*. It bills itself as being an "image-intensive, ad free, non-profit, 100 per-cent post-consumer recycled, 96-page quarterly." The magazine is filled with pop cultural references, politically active content, inspirational stories, pictures of thongs with both "Jesus votes Republican" and "Jesus was a Liberal" emblazoned on the front, and musings such as "God isn't on your side. What if there are no sides?" Contributors include bestselling author Bill McKibben, folksinger Michelle Shocked and artist Diana Thorneycroft.

Geez may be an indication that Christianity, or at least some form of it, is becoming cool again. Witness the Dec. 18 episode of *Family Guy*, entitled "The Father, the Son and the Holy Fonz." The story revolves around main character Peter creating his own religion, the Church of the Fonz. In an escalation of the joke, first Sherman Hemsley, then Gavin Macleod swing by Peter's church with their own religions, each winning followers. The episode ends with an earnest Kirk Cameron from *Growing Pains* saying, "I'm here to convert people back to Christianity," and Peter's congregation following him out.

Then there are the big screen's two Christian allegories, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, the first in the Narnia franchise. Both are huge box office successes. *The Lord of the Rings* was the biggest December opener ever, making US$72.8 million, and the first Narnia film came in second, at US$65.6 million. In music, Kanye West's *Jesus Walks* has spent more than 20 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100, R. Kelly's *U Saved Me* did a total of 34 weeks on various charts including the World R&B Top 30 Singles, and Los Lonely Boys topped the *Billboard* Adult Contemporary chart for 18 weeks with *Heaven*.

Church attendance among young people was up to 22 per cent in 2000 from 18 per cent in 1992, according to research done by Reginald Bibby, sociologist at the University of Lethbridge and author of *Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada*. While the increase is small, it goes hand in hand with Canada's larger interest in spirituality: a full 81 per cent of Canadians say they believe in God or a higher being. And although Christianity is still the dominant religion, "spirituality has increasingly burst through the barriers of religious buildings and religious definitions and gone public," says Bibby. "The name of the game is spirituality à la carte."

Geez is certainly trying to break through barriers. "The magazine is a reflection of who we are," says Braun. "We grew up in a Christian environment, and that's the case for many."



But for many it doesn't work to divide the world up between Christian and non-Christians. There's room in *Geez* for Buddhists, atheists and none of the above. We're hoping for a diversity of voices."

Geez promotes the Christianity of social change and revolution

Rather than brimstone and hellfire, it's Christianity re-branded with a "Jesus is my homey" slogan. "Two years ago I was guessing the time is ripe for a magazine like this," says Enns. "Now we're shipping out to 500 paid subscribers in 35 states and eight provinces." It isn't a huge start. Then again, the religion from which *Geez* has sprung started small as well—with a handful of disciples two millennia ago. M



TURKMENISTAN: ENGLISH IS IN, YANNI IS OUT

No one can say that Turkmenistan President Saparmurat Niyazov Turkmenbashi doesn't give explicit instructions; it's just that some of them are eccentric. His latest is to order his government ministers to become fluent in English within six months or face termination. The leader of the Central Asian nation has previously ordered the creation of a penguin sanctuary in the desert and has banned all recorded music and men with long hair.



PHOTO BY MACKENZIE STROH

The smartypants scam

The panties with built-in GPS won raves in Cosmo and sold out online. They just didn't exist.

BY SKANDA DEZIEL • Back in the spring of '05, a curious new product began popping up in blogs and then in mainstream publications such as *Rolling Stone*, the *Guardian*, the *Observer* and Australian *Cosmo*. Forget Me Not Panties, a line of women's underwear with a built-in global positioning system (GPS), was advertised by its creators as a way to keep track of girlfriends, wives or daughters. It was an instant hit. The product website, *forgetmenotpanties.com*, noted it was sold out. Close to 2,000 people put their names on the waiting list. Companies such as Target, the giant U.S. department store, clamoured to distribute it.

It would have been one of the most successful product launches of 2005—if there had been a product. But Leba Haber Rubinoff and Katie Marsh had created the website as a hoax. It was an entry in the Contagious Media Showdown, a competition run by New York art/science non-profit think tank, Eyebeam, which offered a US$2,000 prize for the site that gained the most traffic in a three week window without using paid advertising.

Haber Rubinoff had come up with the idea for the panties while at New York University, as part of a satiric project updating the chastity belt. "We would never want to design and sell panties with GPS," says the 29-year old Vancouver native. For her and Marsh, the site was a humorous way to get people talking about gender. "Initially, our intent was to make people kind of angry, get a passionate response," says Haber Rubinoff. "We thought we were going to get a lot of women and feminists who were upset, but in fact a lot of the women who emailed us wanted to have a male version of the panties." The duo, who call themselves the Panty Raiders, won the competition—and garnered mass amounts of press. "People wrote about us without doing a lot of research," says Haber Rubinoff, noting that most articles have talked about the panties as if they were real. "If you just Google us you'd find out that we're part of a competition."

The competition was set up by Eyebeam's Jonah Peretti, who is interested in how—and which—ideas spread virally across the Internet. He credits the "bored at work network," people who surf for strange Web content and email it to friends. "The criteria seems to be, when people hear about it they need to tell other people about it," Peretti says. "They forward to friends, it gets linked on a blog, a reporter reads the blog and writes something, and then all of a sudden it snowballs."

BUZZ HOUNDS: The hoax was a study in how ideas spread virally over the Internet

For him, it all started with "the Nike email." In the winter of 2001, Peretti went on the Nike site that lets customers design their own shoes. He ordered a pair with "sweatshop" written on them, which led to a series of emails with a customer-service agent who said that word wasn't appropriate. Peretti posted the exchange on the Web and emailed it to 12 friends just to make them laugh. Within two weeks his inbox was clogged with responses from strangers. He was being interviewed by newspapers across the country and debating a Nike executive on the *Today* show.

His next project was the Rejection Line, a website that listed a phone number which, when dialled, delivered this message. "Unfortunately the person who gave you this does not want to talk to you or speak to you again. We would like to take this opportunity to officially reject you. If you want to hear from our comfort specialist, Press 1. If you want to hear a sad poem, written by a kindred spirit, Press 2....." This time Peretti was interviewed on TV and radio as a "rejection expert." "After hearing stories about people using it in ways that were gross," he says, "I started to feel that I wanted to do things where I care more about the issue."

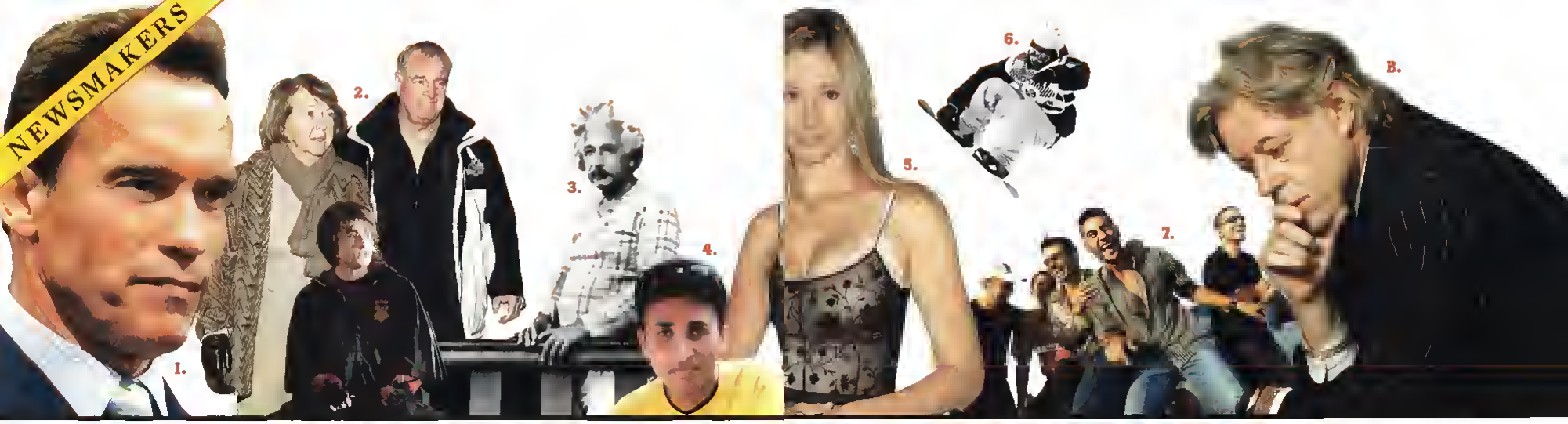
Enter the Contagious Media Showdown, an exercise in truth, buzz and media manipulation. The runners-up included the hilarious Crying While Eating, a series of Web videos of people doing just that, and Ring-Tone Dancer, a set of videos of a masked man in a leotard dancing in public spaces to the sound of a cellphone ringing. Peretti holds workshops bringing together experts in contagious media—"the pro-corporate and anti-corporate and the artists and the hackers." It was after attending one of these that the Panty Raiders hit upon the hoax model. "It was right on the border, believable enough that people thought it was true," says Peretti. "That's very effective."

Initially the Panty Raiders were the underdog. But then they were noticed by popular blogs such as College Humor and Fark and the search engine Excite. Since the contest ended, in May, they've had over a million unique visitors. The win has inspired them to make a joke version of the underwear to sell. And they're dedicating themselves to guerrilla-style, mostly Web based projects with a feminist twist. Their slogan is "Don't find us, we'll find you." Keep a close eye on your inbox. M



WHY CHAINSAWS BELONG OUTSIDE

Here's a tip on how to survive the holiday. A) Don't clean your chainsaw indoors. Kenneth Knox tried it last week in Vassalboro, Maine, and was told by a brother-in-law to take it outside. B) Don't respond by pulling the TV cable out of the wall, as Knox did, and whipping your brother-in-law. C) Don't chase him with an axe. D) Don't pour gasoline on a wood stove, burning the family home down. If you do all this, you will be pepper-sprayed and arrested.



‘[SHE’S] A NICE ADDITION TO THE FORCE. SHE’S A VERY BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY.’—LACKAWANNA COUNTY, PA, POLICE SHERIFF JOHN SZYMANSKI, AFTER SWEARING IN ACTRESS MIRA SORVINO

1. THIS TIME, HE WON’T BE BACK

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, who angered residents and politicians in Graz, Austria, by allowing the execution of convicted killer Stan (Tookie) Williams last month, has broken all ties with his hometown. At his request, the Arnold Schwarzenegger Stadium has been renamed, and his name has been taken off the city’s websites. Also, as part of the spat over capital punishment, the 58-year-old Terminator turned-California governor returned a “ring of honour” that the city gave him in 1999 and Austria’s Green Party wants him stripped of his Austrian citizenship. Whatever the case, Arnold won’t be back.

2. ISN’T THERE AN ELECTION TO WIN?

Trying to get away from it all, or seeking a little magic for the campaign trail? PAUL MARTIN and his wife SHEILA were spotted taking in an afternoon screening of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* in Montreal last week. Surrounded by a bevy of bodyguards—commanding no less than eight seats in the sold-out IMAX theatre—the couple exited before the credits were over, vanishing through a side door to escape the gawkers who’d recognized them. He was looking bored and tired, a teenage source told *Maclean’s*. It’s a common effect of the campaign, it seems.

3. HOW ABOUT A THEORY TO MAKE THE FOOD BETTER?

Using the same geometry that appears in ALBERT EINSTEIN’s theory of relativity, researchers have found that the back-to-front boarding procedure used by most airlines isn’t the quickest. “Congestion is crucial,” says Eitan Bachmat, a computer science professor at Israel’s Ben Gurion University. “Back-to-front might work if the whole plane was as spacious as first class or if people were about an inch thick. The thing is, it takes time for people to get organized, which causes a backup.”

Several recent simulation-based studies support Bachmat’s conclusion—airlines can shave about 10 per cent off their boarding time if they allowed passengers to go to their seats randomly—but he and his co-researchers are the first to provide mathematical formulas. “Of course,” he says, “there’s always a passenger who is late, which changes everything.”

4. COMFORTABLE SHOES ARE A MUST

SURESH JOACHIM will start moonwalking on Jan. 11 and won’t stop until he ends up in the *Guinness World Records*. His plan is to mimic the King of Pop’s famous move for 24 hours on the dance floor of a Mississauga, Ont., night club. “I was very keen on breakdancing when I was young,” says Joachim, 36, who expects to clock more than 40 km. “I have the stamina. The toughest thing is the fact I’ll be going backwards the entire time.”

If successful, Joachim will shatter the current record of 2.4 km over one hour. Sri Lankan-born Joachim, who now lives in Mississauga, will eat potatoes, hard-boiled eggs and chocolate for energy. “I can’t drink a lot or else I’ll have to go to the toilet too much,” he says. “So I’ll just sip some water while I’m dancing.”

This stunt is the latest in Joachim’s effort to break 150 world records (he currently holds 21) and raise money for the world’s impoverished children. Next December, he’ll set out on a ridiculously ambitious 6,000 km, 181-day marathon that will take him to 54 countries in hopes of raising $1 billion. Joachim has no plans to incorporate the moonwalk into that feat.

1. AP 2. ADRIAN WYLD/CP 3. EVERETT COLLECTION 5. AMACA 6. RICHARD LAM/CP 8. AP

5. AT LEAST SHE CAN STOP TRAFFIC

In Lackawanna County, Pa., actress MIRA SORVINO is the new sheriff in town. Sworn in last week by sheriff John Szymanski, Sorvino won’t be allowed to pack a gun, but will get a badge. “[She’s] a nice addition to the force,” says Szymanski, who bestowed the same honour on Sorvino’s father, Paul, in 1982. “She’s a very beautiful young lady.” After posing for her ID photo, Mira, who won an Oscar for best supporting actress for her role in Woody Allen’s *Mighty Aphrodite*, was asked if this honorary crime-fighting post is as big a thrill as winning an Academy Award. “That’s a hard one,” she said. “I’m not going to comment.”

6. JAMAICAN BOB-SLEDDERS BEWARE

Soon after KORY WRIGHT’s bronze medal upset win in a World Cup half pipe event last month, the office of the Bahamas high commissioner to Canada was trying to get in touch with the 20-year-old snowboarder. They wanted to offer their congratulations, of course, but also talk about the possibility of making Wright—who was born in the Bahamas before moving to Canada with his mother when he was a baby—the island nation’s first winter Olympic athlete.

So far, Wright and High Commissioner Philip Smith have played telephone tag but they should connect this week now that Smith is back from holidays. Wright is not on the Canadian team for the Turin Games, which start next month and isn’t eligible to compete until the 2010 Olympics. And though the Calgary native had been planning to represent Canada in Vancouver that year, he isn’t ruling anything out. “It’s all up in the air right now,” says Wright, who heads to Austria for a World Cup event on Jan. 9. “I’m just interested to hear what they have to say.”

7. WILL THEY LIVE UP TO THEIR NAME?

UNKNOWN TO NO ONE, Iraq’s only boy band, is hoping to earn some world-wide fame now that Saddam Hussein’s military dictatorship has been disposed of. And the band—which includes two Armenian Christians, a Sunni Muslim Kurd and two Shiite Muslims—has made the first step by moving to London, England, where they’ll work on a new album thanks to $2 million of support from an American entrepreneur.

Although the boy band craze is pretty much dead—especially in North America—the group, which formed in 1999, can expect a lot more success than they experienced during Saddam’s reign. Back then, to get airtime on state radio for their single, *Hey Girl*, Saddam’s son Uday required that the band write a birthday song for his father. They did. Problem was, the song for Saddam played every hour for a week, while *Hey Girl* aired only once.

8. A RAT HEADING FOR THE TORY SHIP

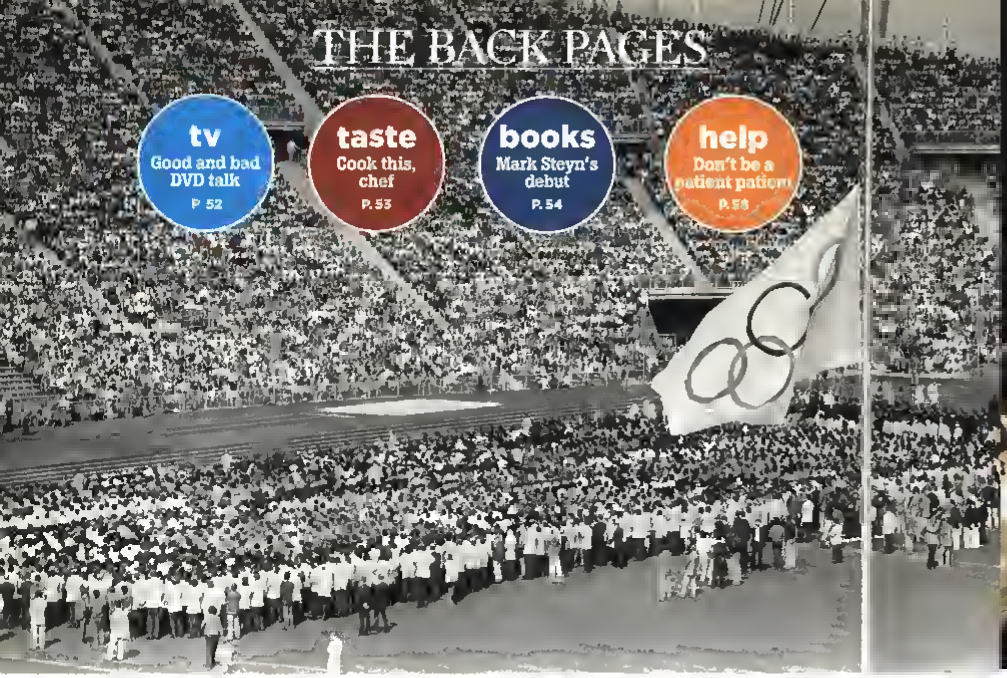
Forget about his friendship with Tony Blair and his very public battle in the 1980s with Margaret Thatcher, BOB GELDOF has accepted a role as the Conservative party’s new adviser on global poverty. Liberal Democrat party members argue that the political move tarnishes Geldof’s reputation (the former Boomtown Rats singer is best known for organizing Live Aid in 1985 and Live 8 last summer). But Geldof, who says he’ll only spend about three hours in total talking to Tories in this unpaid role, promises to remain non-partisan. In fact, he adds, by asking him to join the policy group on globalization and poverty, Conservative leader David Cameron is “playing with fire.” M

tv
Good and bad DVD talk
P. 52

taste
Cook this, chef
P. 53

books
Mark Steyn's debut
P. 54

help
Don't be a patient patron
P. 58





THE REAL MUNICH AND THE FILM VERSION: (Left) The Israeli athletes who were killed by Arab terrorists are remembered at a Sept. 6, 1972, service in Munich's Olympic Stadium. (Right) A scene from Spielberg's movie *Munich*, inspired by George Jonas's book *Vengeance*

THE SPIELBERG MASSACRE

My book was all about avenging evil. Then the King of Hollywood got hold of it.

BY GEORGE JONAS

December 7, 2005. Janice Luke offers us popcorn. She is a young woman from the marketing department of Universal Studios, setting up a private screening at the Varsity Theatre in Toronto. My wife, Maya, her Seeing Eye dog, Daisy, a colleague of mine and I are about to be shown *Munich*, the movie Steven Spielberg's soon-to-be-released screen version of my book *Vengeance*. Until now I haven't seen a frame of the film. I haven't even read the screenplay. But I think I have some idea of what I am about to see—and not just because I remember the original historic event or because I wrote the book. It's because I have an inkling of Spielberg's take on human affairs.

"A win-win situation," says my colleague encouragingly. "If you like the film, fine. If you don't, you can cry all the way to the bank."

I wish. But things are rarely that simple.

Late Fall 1981. Vengeance becomes mine because of a chance encounter. On my way out of Toronto's Windsor Arms Hotel, Nick Harris hails me from across the foyer. The dapper publisher of Collins Canada wants to know if I'm free tomorrow to drop by the offices of another publisher, Malcolm Lester of Lester & Orpen Dennys, to meet "a man with an interesting story to tell." I happen to be free, and I'm curious what kind of story might prompt a large commercial house like Collins to co-publish a book with a small elite house like Lester & Orpen Dennys. And this is how I meet my eventual source for *Vengeance* who will in due course become known as "Avner" to readers, television viewers, and moviegoers around the world. The 30-ish man in Lester's office leaves after a short and seemingly pointless conversation. I won't describe him, suffice it to say that he doesn't look anything like Eric Bana from *Munich*. Far from turning heads in the street, he wouldn't attract a second glance.

The publishers hand me a few pages containing the outline—the bare bones, really—of his story. If I find it interesting, Harris and Lester will pay me for eliciting it in full detail from the source, then verifying it as much as I can. If we all conclude that the tale amounts to a potential book, I will be engaged to write it for a guaranteed advance against a share of the royalties. The bulk of the advance would come from a third member of the publishing consortium, Collins UK.

I glance at the outline. It is about Israel's prime minister, Golda Meir, authorizing a small group of agents to find and kill 11 people on a list for having masterminded the massacre at Munich. The nondescript man in Lester's office is supposed to have been the leader of this Israeli hit team.

September 5, 1972. Eight Black September terrorists are observed scaling a six-foot wire fence leading to Munich's Olympic village. The time is around 4 a.m. During the next 21 hours the terrorists will slaughter 11 Israeli athletes—two during their initial assault on the team's quarters, and nine during a failed German attempt to rescue the hostages. Five of the terrorists will also lose their lives; three will be captured. Next day the Olympic Games will continue, with officials taking the view that the show must go on.

Within 41 days of the murder of the Israeli athletes, some Arabs living in Europe, described as terrorist organizers, start meeting violent deaths. The first to be shot, in the lobby of his apartment building in Rome, is a man named Wael Zwaiter, one of Yasser Arafat's cousins. The poet Zwaiter is the author—or so Israel's security service, the Mossad, holds—not only of a modern translation of *A Thousand and One Nights* but also of an August 1972 attempt to blow up an El Al jet. On Dec. 8, 1972, Dr Mahmoud Hamshari is fatally injured when the phone explodes in his Paris apartment. On Jan. 24, 1973, Abad al-Chir's bed blows up as he sits on it in his hotel room in Nicosia, Cyprus. Dr Basil al-Kubaisi is gunned down in a Paris street 2½ months later, on April 6. In another Paris street on June 28, 1973, Mohammed Boudia is blown up by a bomb as he's about to start his car. These men lose their lives in targeted assassinations, though the phrase isn't yet in use. No country, government, or organization ever claims responsibility.

Spring and Summer 1982. Debriefing "Avner" and double-checking details of his story takes the better part of a year, much of it spent in Paris, London, Rome, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Rehovot, Nahariya, Zurich, Geneva, Glarus, Frankfurt, Bucharest, and Budapest. In addition to putting meat on the bones of the story of *Vengeance*, I learn something about the rudiments of "tradecraft," from surveillance to communication. Nondescript "Avner" turns out to be an enthusiastic teacher. He explains how to select safe houses and to make sure one isn't being followed.

As company, "Avner" is middling. He's hygienic to a fault and washes his hands more often than Pontius Pilate. Businesslike but not made of stone, sometimes he turns to look at a passing woman. "Do you fancy her?" I ask occasionally. "She'll do," he replies, "under field conditions."

Why do ex-agents like "Avner" tell their stories? I conclude it is to relive them, mainly. Coming in from the cold, frozen "spooks" need to thaw out. In the beginning they lie low and shiver. Gradually, they get warm and restless. The gulf between their high-wire past and humdrum present is too great. This convinces some that making public their exploits—along with the corruption, inefficiency, treachery, and ruthlessness of their former masters—is a kind of historic duty. Coupled with financial need—ex-spooks rarely have marketable skills other than security work—the motivation to "confess" becomes overwhelming. Even confessing to murder? The answer is "murder" is a legal term. They don't view what they did as murder.

Can such tales be believed? I think so, though always keeping in mind many spooks possess the imagination of the Baron Munchausen. They recall being in the thick of every battle and winning it single-handedly. Their information being difficult to check reinforces their inclination to tell tall tales, partly to enhance the financial value of their story, and partly to please their interlocutor by telling him what they figure he wishes to hear.

Checking by conventional means is difficult. One can try going through official channels, but secret services rarely confirm employment. Cover identities—so-called legends—are set up to withstand inquiries. Fact-checking clandestine operations is virtually a contradiction in terms—if a government agency reveals anything about a covert operation, it's likely to be disinformation. Proof of provenance isn't proof of veracity. Official confirmation or denial of intelligence matters is just about useless.

Thus leaves the physical edges of a story. For verification, one can have informers describe the places that figure in their narratives, then

GETTY IMAGES
UNIVERSAL PICTURES





THEN AND NOW: (Left) A memorial service in Toronto honours the Israeli athletes who died at Munich. (Right) In the movie *Munich* Israeli generals meet with Prime Minister Golda Meir. Screenwriter Tony Kushner says he and Spielberg do not wish to demonize either side.

TORONTO STAR/CP

UNIVERSAL PICTURES

see if they got them right. One can ask if a certain crucial day in their story, nine years ago, was sunny or overcast. Then check the records. The more details check out, the more likely a statement is true. Such evidence would be admissible in court.

On this level "Avner" checks out. He knows how a light switch operates in an obscure apartment building in Rome, the scene of one of the assassinations. He recalls awnings above the stores along a little side street in Paris, where another "target" is being followed. This isn't the kind of information one reads in newspapers. I make my report to the publishers and we decide to proceed.

Late Spring 1984. The book becomes a minor bestseller, eventually reaching 21 editions in 13 languages. It is viewed as controversial in several ways. Soviet aid to terrorism, as outlined in *Vengeance*, is still hotly disputed in 1984. So is the question of whether democracies, such as Israel, would ever send—or have ever sent—hit teams to operate abroad. Some critics believe the story, some do not. *Maclean's* runs a cover story on the book but then refuses to publish excerpts from it. Writing in the *New York Times*, Ken Follett says parts of the book are "as convincing as a Breughel" while other parts seem to him to exude "an air of mendacity." Gen. Zvi Zamir, former head of the Mossad, dismisses the account as a fairy tale. Former RCMP Security Service director Gen. John Starnes considers the story essentially true. In Britain, *Vengeance* becomes the only book to make both the fiction and non-fiction bestseller list.

The tale of Israel's retribution spawns several book-club and mass-market paperback editions, one academic paper, and a made-for-TV movie before it gradually runs out of steam and print. By the mid '90s it is available in English only in the used-book markets of the Internet. Fourteen years go by.

July 21, 1998. The man who phones me in Toronto introduces himself as Barry Mendel. He tells me he's a Hollywood producer. I'm not surprised when he asks if the film rights for *Vengeance* are available. Other producers ask that question from time to time, but lose interest when I tell them that not only were the film rights sold long ago, but a film called *Sword of Gideon* has already been made from the book. Mendel doesn't lose interest. Who has the remake rights and would they be available to him? I promise to find out.

What follows is a 2½ year ballet with American enterprise partnering Canadian lassitude. Alliance Atlantis owns the contract containing provisions for the remake of a film—or so everybody thinks but no one can find the records. Feb. 18, 1999—Los Angeles: "Any news?" Toronto: "We're searching our records." On March 23, 1999, Canada's super agent lawyer Michael Levine gets involved. Sept. 23, 1999—Los Angeles: "Any news?" Toronto: "We're searching our records." A week later Mendel telephones to say that the interested studio is now Universal. (This must be when the project is being pitched to Spielberg, although Mendel doesn't yet mention his name.) Feb. 18, 2000—Los Angeles: "Any news?" Toronto: "We're searching our records." Finally, after 2½ years, Alliance Atlantis picks up Universal's offer, putting Mendel in a position to commission a screenplay.

December 2000-February 2004. The phrase used in Hollywood is "development hell." It means studio bigwigs trying to get screenwriters to write scripts they themselves would write if they knew how. It also means writers—or "stenographers" as the ink-stained wretches are known locally—trying to read the minds of the studio bigwigs. The winning stenographer guesses correctly, and the losing ones vanish into a black hole.

The producers hear I've been asked to the Golden Globes. Would I please not go?

It will eventually take five writers to satisfy the masters of Universal and Spielberg's Dream Works: two credited, three unsung. In hockey terms, Tony Kushner will get the goal and Eric Roth the assist for *Munich*, but the puck will have been handled by at least three other players: Janet and David Peoples first, and later Charles Randolph.

On "King's Cross," as the *Vengeance* project is code-named by the studio, first to drop into the black hole are Jan and Dave Peoples. They're no slouches in Hollywood terms. Oscar-nominated Dave Peoples has writing credits on the cult-classic *Blade Runner* and Clint Eastwood's *Unforgiven*. Retained to write the first draft, they email me in December 2002, saying that if I find myself in the San Francisco area, they'll have a finished script to show me. I suggest some dates in January. There's no reply. In showbiz no reply usually means somebody has been sucked into a black hole. Sure enough, by March there's an email from Mendel: "Just to quickly fill you in," it says, "we have brought on a new writer, Eric Roth. He's written a lot of films, *Forrest Gump*, *The Insider*, *Ali*, many others. He's been working for about a month, and everyone is very pleased with his work."

The thing to remember is that in showbiz everyone is "very pleased with" or "very excited by" everybody else's work, until both exciters and excitees are sucked into the next black hole. The handwriting is on the wall as Mendel continues: "Eric is very deeply impressed by the book, and he and we are sticking very closely to it. The changes being made are more dialogue and such, and the basic story and much of the good work Dave and Jan did remains." These are the exit lines for Dave and Jan Peoples. It's the last time anyone mentions their names. As I find out later, Spielberg decides that he's potentially "in" after he reads the Peoples' draft script in December 2002, but he still wants new writers. The Peoples have guessed wrong when they retained too much of the spirit of *Vengeance*.

Spielberg's entry marks the last time any one offers to let me read a draft script. It also begins an era of comical hush-hush. Mendel phones to warn that if Spielberg's potential "in" leaks, he's immediately "out." I tell him he might as well kiss the great helmsman goodbye, for a leak is inevitable. To my surprise, it doesn't come until May 2003. I email Mendel:

"Barry, I'm told the composer John Williams described on CNN the project as one being developed by the director we talked about. Can you give me an update?"

He replies three days later: "George, thanks for the word about Mr. Williams. The word has been passed along to put a muzzle on it! The bad news is that the rewrite is taking longer than we'd all hoped, and our hopes for shooting this summer are fading. The good news is that the pages (I've read 124 of them) are very good. If I had to guess, I would say we are looking at a start date in the first quarter of next year. Enthusiasm is still very high."

Translated from Hollywoodese, "enthusiasm high" means "expectations guarded." That's when my correspondence with Mendel gets downgraded to his various assistants. One named Molly is asking questions on behalf of Roth, who (unlike the Peoples) seems too busy to ask them himself.

Nearly a year goes by. On Jan. 20, 2004, there's a flurry of traffic. Telephone calls and emails warn me to stand by for a voice from the burning bush. Mendel writes, "You may be getting a call from our erstwhile director. He asked for your number. If you do, please do fill me in afterwards."

Familiar as I am with the vagaries of Malibu



THE ELEVEN WHO DIED (Left to right) Joseph Gottfreund, 40; Moshe Weinberg, 33; Joseph Romano, 32; David Berger, 28; Mark Slavin, 18; Yaakov Springer, 50; Ze'ev Friedman, 28; Amitsur Shapira, 40; Eliezer Halfin, 24; Kahat Shor, 53; Andrei Schpitzer, 27

Spielberg brings to the screen an adolescent's fresh eye—and naïve confusion

English, "erstwhile" puzzles me. When I ask, Mendel replies that it's just a figure of speech. "Your email sent me to the dictionary, and I stand corrected," he explains. Spielberg is still on board, and I never figure out what Mendel thought "erstwhile" meant. In any event, this is my closest brush with cinematic royalty. Spielberg never calls. The good thing is I'm not holding my breath. A few weeks later my agent, Linda McKnight, informs me that Universal has exercised its option and now owns the movie remake rights to *Vengeance*. Close to six years have passed since Mendel's initial phone call.

February 2004-October 2005. There are optimistic rumours of a June shoot, but the movie is nowhere near greenlighted, and Spielberg's involvement is far from assured. The next call, out of the blue, is a text message on my cellphone. "allan mayer, [phone number], works w. steven spielberg & [producers] kathy kennedy barry mendel—doing background check on your book *vengeance*—wants to talk to you briefly." I query Mendel, who says Mayer is "legit." He's a crisis consultant, a must in your corner, an aide top Hollywood talent wouldn't be caught dead without. When I call, a cheerful American voice demands to know if I've retained full confidence in my source over the years. "I don't want you to be defensive," he tells me.

I can be offensive at times but being defensive isn't my style. I tell Mayer that my confidence in "Avner" and his information is the same as it was 20 years ago. I add that though he was not without a capacity for invention, I'm satisfied that "Avner" described a string of operations of which he had first-hand knowledge. Whether or not he exaggerated his own role, I couldn't say.

Mayer subsides. Next I receive word from none other than my old source, "Avner." Apparently Spielberg is now in touch with him. As a result of our conversation, I drop a note to Mendel on March 4, 2004. "Hi Barry," it reads, "all kinds of rumours are reaching me about new writers, script revisions, timetables, etc. Can you give me a status update?"

On March 10 Mendel replies. "George, sorry it's taken me a few days to respond. I was on vacation when you emailed me. There has been some movement in the last couple of days. We are now working with Charles Randolph who wrote *The Life of David Gale* as well as the script for a movie now in production that Sean Penn and Nicole Kidman are starring in and Sydney Pollack is directing called *The Interpreter*. Charles writes accessible, commercial thrillers that don't shy away from exploring complex political situations so he seems like a good fit to keep the project moving forward. SS is still committed."

So now it's Roth's turn in the memory hole. I expect Randolph to follow soon. A young writer of "accessible, commercial thrillers" won't be a solution to whatever Spielberg's problems are with *Vengeance*. In fact, a rumour I hear prompts me to drop Mendel another note. "Barry, the information I received was that the latest writer on the script was going to be the Pulitzer winning author of *Angels in America* (a description that fits only Tony Kushner) and that the source ('Avner') will be meeting with the writer and SS next week when 'Avner' returns from abroad. Can you clear it up for me (or for yourself, in case it's news to you). I'm curious about the script—naturally—and about the changes you and/or SS feel it still requires. Any chance for a look?"

Mendel falls silent, but now the press starts making noises. I try again. "Hi Barry, now that people can read about the project in *Variety*, Reuters, CNN, the *Guardian*, and the *Malta Times*, do you think it's safe enough for me to look at the script?"

This finally brings a reply on April 26 from my old friend Molly. "George, we would love more than anything else to be able to show you the script and get your reaction. Unfortunately, even though we've put the release out in the papers, Steven is still being incredibly private about the project. He did the press release more out of necessity than anything else (someone at *Variety* had gone in the story and was going to run with it, so we figured it was best to co-operate). But we have managed to conceal the basis for the film, the main story seems to be Munich Olympics. There has been no mention of hit teams or anything, and this is very important to Steven. He is not letting ANYONE read the script, including actors and key members of the crew. I wish I could help but unfortunately, things are very strict."

Molly is mistaken, they haven't concealed the basis for the film. The Internet is fairly buzzing with what the project is about. I ask her to have Mendel call me but he doesn't. I'm reduced another notch in the communication chain. The next person I hear from is Sarah, presumably Molly's assistant. She writes in June 2004. "Barry asked me to give you an update on what was happening with *Vengeance*. He is currently on location with another project of ours, but wanted to make sure you knew the status of things. Despite the reports in the trades, things are not definite re: production, though they are moving in a good direction. As of now, there is no finished script (they're still working on it). We will keep you posted as things develop."

The confirmation that production will definitely be put over until 2005, pending a new script to be written by Tony Kushner, comes only in September. It doesn't come from Mendel. It comes from "Avner" who appears to be very much in the loop—and thoroughly besotted. A spook in the grip of celebrity worship is a sight to behold.

"Avner" writes that with the new script Spielberg is planning "in some aspects to stay parallel with the book. But of course he [takes] the book where only Steven can take it." Considering Kushner's stance on Israel, it isn't hard to imagine where that will be. In addition to his magnum opus, *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*, Spielberg's new screenwriter is co-author (with Alisa Solomon) of a 2003 book, *Wrestling With Zion: Progressive Jewish American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. The title forecasts a film that will be a "progressive" Jewish American response to the Munich massacre. No wonder there's a reluctance to let me see the script.

As Kushner becomes key stenographer, *Vengeance* half joins Jan and Dave Peoples, Eric Roth, and Charles Randolph in Hollywood's black hole. The book starts as the basis of the film, then it's "one of many sources," then it's the basis again but only because it's a "contractual obligation," according to Spielberg's spokesman, Marvin Levy. There's no business like show business.

After the production is greenlighted in the spring of 2005, Mendel resumes calling occasionally. He doesn't offer to show me the script and I don't ask. We talk once or twice about cast and locations. When principal photography begins on June 29 in Malta, Mendel phones to let me know. When the shoot moves to Budapest a few weeks later, he informs me again. Reflexively—Budapest is my native city—I ask if there's anything I can do to help. Mendel seems amused. "Help?" he asks. "Maybe you can recommend some restaurants."

December 1, 2005. The phone keeps ringing. Do I expect *Munich* to be different from *Vengeance*? I make no comment, but the answer is obvious. My book is incubating an egg that's not mine. If I'm lucky, it's a different bird's. If I'm unlucky, it's a crocodile's.

Inevitably, Spielberg's film will have 21st century answers to 20th-century questions—and progress isn't necessarily for the better. I researched and wrote my book in 1982 and 1983. By the time Spielberg's film went into production in 2005, the world had become a different place. People had adjusted considerably their sense of right and wrong. In 1984, when *Vengeance* was first published, no state admitted sending hit teams abroad to perform extrajudicial killings. But while the morality of counterterrorist violence would have been questioned, the immorality of terrorist violence would have been beyond dispute.

In 1972 the hooded terrorists of Black September were the bad guys. Even terrorist chieftains like Yasser Arafat tried to distance themselves from Munich-type massacres. By 2005 matters were far more equivocal. Terrorists and counterterrorists alike were coming out of the closet. No longer abashed, both were flaunting their stuff on TV. Security forces coordinated with CNN News to display live broadcasts of targeted assassinations, while video spots on al-Jazeera portrayed the beheadings of hostages and the apotheoses of suicide bombers. Disputing the moral high ground of counterterrorists, terrorists started claiming justification and legitimacy for their acts themselves. Soon the media were describing hijackers and shoebombers as "militants" and "insurgents," elevating the blowing up of shoppers and travellers to a legitimate method of political expression. News clips of airliners slamming into the World Trade Center sent people dancing into the street throughout the Arab world. The new millennium was turning into the Terrorist Century.

As if reading my mind, Mendel telephones. The producers have heard that I've been invited by a journalist friend to attend as her guest a Dec. 6 screening of the film in Los Angeles for the Golden Globe awards. Would I please consider not going? The studio would be happy to set up a private screening for me in Toronto instead.

I understand. There's no telling how an author might react to the Hollywood version of his book under the best of circumstances, and here the circumstances may not be the best. The 60 or so voters for the Golden Globes will be at the L.A. screening. The producers don't want to take a chance that I might rain on Spielberg's parade.

My source is besotted—and in the loop. Spielberg, he tells me, is taking the book 'where only Steven can take it.'

I promise Mendel not to go. As it turns out, Spielberg gets the Golden Globe nomination for best director, while Tony Kushner and Eric Roth are nominated for best screenplay. The following day *Munich* is screened for us in Toronto.

December 7, 2005. The credits have just finished rolling. My wife, Maya, and her guide dog, Daisy, left the screening earlier. My colleague and I are looking at each other.

"Moral posturing," I say finally, "allows you to have it both ways. In Tinseltown terms, after the gunslinger blows everyone away, he has a proper crisis of conscience."

"Did 'Avner' have a crisis of conscience?" my colleague asks.

I consider the question. *Vengeance*'s "Avner" had several crises. First, he had a crisis of nerve—understandable, considering his line of work. Battle brings about battle fatigue. The "Avner" I knew also had a crisis of self-image. He wanted to be seen as the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dyke, and realized how easy it was to go from hero to bum in a second if a dam burst despite his best efforts. Most of all, he had a crisis of expectations. His masters promised him a rose garden—but then they didn't deliver. He may not have done what he did for money, but he could not get over being cheated of what he understood was his due. My "Avner" may have questioned the utility of his mission toward the end—targeted assassinations barely slowed down terrorism, let alone stopped it—but he never questioned the morality of what his country had asked him to do. He had no pangs of guilt. He just wanted to show his cheating masters—as he saw them—that they couldn't cheat him with impunity.

Over the next few days I try to formulate the difference between the book and the movie precisely. A mirror image? A coat worn inside out? Spielberg's *Munich* follows the letter of my book closely enough. The spirit is almost the opposite. *Vengeance* holds there is a difference between terrorism and counterterrorism; *Munich* suggests there isn't. The book has no trouble telling an act of war from a war crime; the film finds it difficult. Spielberg's movie worries about the moral trap of resisting terror; my book worries about the moral trap of not resisting it. The story could be called *A Tale of Two Avners*. "But Mr. Jonas's Avner, unlike Mr. Spielberg's, is not paralyzed by moral doubt," as Edward Rothstein would point out eventually in the *New York Times*.

The Week of December 12, 2005. Here, finally, is something for Palestinian terrorists and Mossad officials to agree on: my book is bunk. Sole surviving Munich massacre mastermind Abu Daoud, No. 2 target on "Avner's" list, tells Reuters that *Vengeance* is "full of errors." He doesn't specify what they are. Israeli officials talk about many "technical mistakes." They, too, avoid giving a single example. Both sides feel Spielberg should have relied on their stories rather than mine. It's a breakthrough, perhaps the first one in the history of the Middle East. It beats Oslo. If Palestinians and Israelis can agree on one thing, perhaps in time they'll find other things to agree on.

Many who want to discredit Spielberg's

BETTMANN/CORBIS





THE AUTHOR AND THE KING OF HOLLYWOOD Spielberg's movie follows the letter of his book closely enough, says Jonas, but the spirit is almost the opposite *Munich* 'worries about the moral trap of resisting terror; my book worries about the moral trap of not resisting it.'

PHOTO BY WILLIAM CICCOCIOPPO CORBIS/SYGMA

The Detroit Free Press goes one better by writing that I myself am the Israeli hit man

vision in *Munich* start by throwing stones at my research in *Vengeance* Some stone-throwers live in glass houses The Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* floats the canard that my source was revealed to be one "Yuval Aviv" in the late 1980s when I sued him in a contract dispute in New York The fact is, I've never sued anyone in my life, in New York or anyplace else Later *Ha'aretz* retracts the story, but not before it spreads to the *Los Angeles Times* and some other papers Soon the *Detroit Free Press* will go one better by writing that I myself am "Avner" "The film is based in part on a book titled *Vengeance* by George Jonas, who claimed to be the leader of the assassination squad (Some of his version has been disputed)," writes a reviewer named Terry Lawson, displaying a particular genius for research

A couple of friends tell me that former Mossad head Zvi Zamir recently attended a dinner party at the home of a mutual acquaintance in Toronto When the conversation turned to *Munich*, the movie, the general remarked that he knew my source At one time, he said, my source had some low-level security job with El Al He never played a role in any other mission. My friends want to know what I have to say to this.

All I can say is that Gen Zamir is consistent; he said much the same thing 20 years ago. He is certainly an authoritative source But impeccable sources don't necessarily amount to impeccable information Hearing it from the horse's mouth means little when the horse may have reason not to tell the truth

The Week of December 19, 2005 Reviews and press comments on *Munich* accumulate. Spielberg is quoted as saying that the real enemy in the Middle East is intransigence He conceives of *Munich* as a prayer for peace His screenwriter Tony Kushner says they do not wish to demonize either side

Such remarks illustrate why, in an era of moral chaos, Hollywood is unlikely to restore clarity With due respect to pop culture and its undisputed master, one doesn't reach the moral high ground by being neutral between good and evil Spielberg is a fabulous entertainer, a magician of a director, a very astute businessman—maybe, just maybe, it's too much to ask that he should be a significant moral philosopher as well He brings to the screen an adolescent's fresh eye that's his strength He also brings an adolescent's naïve confusion that's his weakness Off screen, his weakness takes over as he meanders in some peculiar La La Landesque fantasy he plans to distribute 250 video cameras to Palestinian and Israeli children, 125 to each group, so they can record their ordinary lives, exchange tapes, and foster dialogue (Sure, says my wife, and some Palestinian kids will use Spielberg's cameras to record their statements as suicide bombers) There's nothing like a touch of film director's megalomania mixed with "progressive" delusions

A few leftist reviewers flavour their remarks with a soupçon of anti-Semitism. They hint that Jews object to *Munich* because they're racist, and can't stand that Spielberg-Kushner view Palestinians as human beings. Writing for Bloomberg, Margaret Carlson says Spielberg treats the Palestinians as people, and that's enough to turn off a large segment of frequent moviegoers (read Jews) But treating Palestinians as people doesn't turn off a large segment of the Jewish population, as Carlson implies, what might turn them off is treating *terrorists* as people Not demonizing human beings is dandy, but in their effort not to demonize humans, Spielberg and Kushner end up humanizing demons

(Note to self Take a deep breath You only wrote the book. People should see the movie and decide for themselves. Go recommend some restaurants)

According to *Time*, the moviemakers talked at length with the real "Avner" during their research Did he tell Spielberg something different from what he told me? I have no idea. The moviemakers invented certain episodes, such as a meeting and conversation between "Avner" and "Ah," the fictional leader of a Palestinian group of fedayeen It's a didactic, artificial, and faintly ludicrous scene that leaves no cliché unturned—but it's not illegitimate *Munich* isn't a documentary, Spielberg and Kushner have every right to put their own words in "Avner's" mouth, even if it makes him sound like a character who wandered onto the wrong set from the daytime soaps "Tell me something, Ali Do you really miss your father's olive trees?" But maybe the helmsman and his stenographer didn't have to invent much It's entirely possible that in the time-honoured tradition of informers and spooks, my source has told the left-leaning moviemakers what they wanted to hear The information tends to be slanted to fit the expectations of the recipient, whether it is MI6 reporting to Prime Minister Tony Blair, the CIA to President George W Bush, or "Avner" to the great helmsman Spielberg If Spielberg, a dove, was looking for a stick with which to beat Israel's—and America's—hawks, my one-time source may have been ready to hand it to him

The result isn't so much a celluloid fable of moral equivalence, as a triumphant—indeed, orgasmic—battle hymn of the dove Its climax has "Avner" fornicating in a grotesque montage, intercut with violent visions of the Olympic hostage drama The inspiration for it probably comes from the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani, whom I quote in *Vengeance*, celebrating his new-found potency after Israel's initial setbacks in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Qabbani is sexually aroused by Arab warriors crossing the Suez Canal Spielberg and Kushner see "Avner" sexually aroused by the massacre at Munich There's no accounting for tastes

Most of the media are in awe A masterpiece, according to *Time*. *Rolling Stone* ups the ante by adding the adjective "mournful" before "masterpiece." The *Hollywood Reporter* calls it "a thought-provoking, highly charged inquiry." Chicago's dynamic duo offers two thumbs "way up" There are dissenting voices—"a lumpy and overlong morality play," says *Variety*—but most critics rave

Inevitably, *Variety*'s review calls to mind an anecdote about G B Shaw His play is a huge success, the audience is going berserk, the author is taking curtain calls A gentleman in the balcony boos. Shaw raises his hand for silence "Sir," he says to his irate critic, "I agree with you. But what can the two of us do against all these people?"

After the film opens, someone tells me that Spielberg shouldn't get an Oscar for not solving the problems of the Middle East I agree Spielberg should get an Oscar for making *Munich*, the gritty Hollywood flick For not solving the problems of the Middle East, he should get a Nobel Peace Prize, like everyone else. M



WE'RE STALKING...
KATIE HOLMES AND TOM CRUISE'S BABY

According to the *New York Post*, a new rumour circulating among Scientologists online identifies Holmes as the reincarnation of Scientology founder L Ron Hubbard's gay son, Quentin, who died in Las Vegas in 1976 at the age of 22. Coincidentally, the report said, church members often suspect Cruise himself of being the second coming of L. Ron. No word on who the baby used to be.



SCENES FROM ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT The pilot of the show on DVD un-bleeps some of the swear words

So in this episode...what show is this again?

Studios are busy adding extra features to TV-DVDs. A few of them are even insightful.

BY JAMIE J. WEINMAN • No wonder people stayed home from movie theatres this past holiday season they've been watching complete seasons of TV shows on DVD, which have become a huge part of the home video industry and a popular holiday gift. And as TV on DVD becomes big business, studios are putting more resources into creating extra features for these releases. It's not easy to create special features for a TV episode TV shows are produced so fast that the creators may not necessarily remember much about how they were made. But still they try. Some of these features are insightful, others are just there so that there will be something to advertise on the back of the box. But most TV-on-DVD special features fall into three basic categories.

Audio commentaries: As with feature films, the most common special feature for TV shows is the audio commentary, in which the participants talk over an episode—mostly about how much they love everything; if you think Hollywood writers are bitter and cynical, listen to the commentary tracks for episodes of *Seinfeld*, where creators Larry David and Jerry Seinfeld have little to say except "Boy, that was a great show" and "What show is this? This is the end of season what?"

Sometimes a TV episode can give rise to a truly insightful commentary, when you get a writer or producer who really has an interest in analyzing the episode for us. On an episode in Season Four of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, Garry Marshall (*Pretty Woman*) goes into specific details about all aspects of production, even the way loud clothing on the actors can detract from the comedy, and has so much to say that he goes on talking for five minutes after the episode ends. And *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* writer-producer Joss Whedon is beloved by geeks everywhere for his near-scholarly comments on his own episodes.

Few shows have commentaries on every episode, other than *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*, where creator Matt Groening insists on gathering his crew to comment on everything. Most season sets have commentaries on two or three of the best episodes, though sometimes a bad episode will sneak in for variety's sake. The creators of *Batman: The Animated Series* chose to do a commentary on the episode in which Batman battles an

Buffy the Vampire Slayer's Joss Whedon is beloved by geeks everywhere for his near-scholarly comments

evil farmer, and while they defend the episode a little, they mostly make fun of the premise. "You gotta be kidding me—Batman's fighting giant chickens?"

Making-of documentaries: Some shows have, in addition to or instead of commentaries, a mini-documentary in which the creators and stars explain how the show was made. All these making-ofs tell exactly the same story: the creators had an idea, they tested many actors for the leads, and the ones they wound up with were perfect in every way; the show made it to the air but took time to find an audience, the show found an audience and made everybody rich, the end. If the show is a cult flop, that last part is replaced by a segment about how the network never really gave it a chance. However, some recent releases have found new and even insightful approaches to making-of segments. The DVD releases of *Seinfeld* preface most episodes with "Inside Looks" in which the participants recall how they were made. Shows like *Buffy* and the current hit *Lost* feature informal discussions between the cast and crew members. And the '30s romantic whodunit *Remington Steele*, whose DVD releases have been so successful that they have inspired star Pierce Brosnan to plan a feature film based on the show, uses 10-minute featurettes to analyze specific aspects of the show's appeal: the romance, the stunts, and, of course, Doris Roberts.

Deleted scenes. As the DVD release becomes an increasingly essential part of a TV show's life, more and more shows are saving the scenes they had to cut. Some producers even put deleted scenes back, taking advantage of their freedom from commercial breaks to make the episodes longer and, in some cases, better than they could be on network TV. The creators of *Friends* did "extended" versions of many episodes for the DVDs. And the pilot of *Arrested Development* on DVD features six minutes of extra material and even un-bleeps some of the swear words—which, strangely enough, is less funny than the network's bleeped version.

This is only a partial guide to TV-on-DVD features—we haven't even talked about bloopers reels. But whether they are insightful or frightful, they all serve one useful purpose. Without them, TV writers would never have a chance to let the public know who they are. M



AVIATION SAFETY.. ACCORDING TO TV

Airliners in peril have become a major TV subject, the real ones even more than fictional ones (such as the crash that started the hit series, *Lost*). Last week saw live coverage of two imperiled airliners that made ultimately uneventful landings. The week before, even the 140 passengers aboard a troubled JetBlue flight could watch on in-cabin TVs. Says Kelly McBride, a teacher at the Poynter Institute of Journalism, "You can't script the ending. We love that."



YOU'RE PAYING FOR IT, after all. So if you hate pork but love fish, why not have it your way?

'Let's tell the chef how to cook'

Out: the chef-driven tasting menu. In: the customer-tailored tasting menu.

BY AMY BOBEN • It was a big night out. My birthday dinner. Twelve courses, each one a surprise but for a one-word description such as "raw," "braised," "seared." In other words, a menu designed for an adventurous diner, such as myself. At the end of the meal, the consensus was that some of the dishes had been wonderful. Others had not. But the crowning misstep came when I was presented with my "birthday cake," a hapless combination of olive oil pud paired with fennel, anise, and candied orange zest. All of my most hated flavours, together at last! Yay!

So here's the short lesson: you can be as crafty as you like in the kitchen, but at around $125 a head, the food had also better taste great. Because if it doesn't, you've lost a table of repeat customers—which is why the chef-driven tasting menu is on its way out. On its way in the customer-tailored tasting menu. It's really no different than going to a shop and selecting the style of cashmere sweater you want. You're paying for it, after all. So if you hate pork but love fish, why not have it your way?

At the Driskill Grill in Austin, Texas, custom tasting menus are prepared according to each guest's specifications. And in Europe, even three star restaurants such as Guy Savoy in Paris are bucking the chef's menu trend. Following a brief "interview," the chefs prepare custom menus on the spot, but you will pay handsomely for this special attention: Tasting menus start at 285 euros a head.

Recently at Toronto's Splendido restaurant, chef David Lee hosted a dinner at which some lucky, and, presumably, wealthy wine collectors had the chef prepare a menu tailored to their wines. "When you create the menu, the wines have to come first. You have to be humble as a chef, and make sure the flavours don't kill the wines." Dishes included Québec Foie and Suckling Pig Terrine with Cloudberry Compote matched with a 1914 Massandra, and Ontario Fallow Deer Rack and Mushroom Tortellini paired with a 1928 Latour.

Regular diners at Splendido who aren't keen on one of the courses on the tasting menu can choose a substitution from the table d'hôte, and the chef will shrink it down to tasting size. "I think you have to be very accommodating for your customers," says Lee. "I want them to enjoy their experience. Plus, it challenges me more to create something last-minute."

If there's a Canadian chef who knows about creating multiple courses on the fly, it's Iron Chef America winner Rob Feenie, of Lumière restaurant in Vancouver. He says he's happy

'I go to a restaurant to see what the chef has in mind. If I want food cooked my way, I'll do it myself.'

to substitute a course to accommodate allergies or preferences from any of the tasting menus on offer (vegetarian, eight course kitchen and 12-course chef's menu). "Our only guidance in the ordering process is to recommend certain courses and substitutions so the menu retains its flow, because the timing is very important," says the chef. "My kitchen team can facilitate any special request, but impeccable communication with the client from my front-of-house staff is key. We will give creative suggestions on what we can offer, but the final say is always the guest's."

At the Toronto restaurant Perigee, while guests are encouraged to place their trust in chef Pat Riley as he prepares his blind tasting menus, questions are posed beforehand so that the menu is made to match diners' culinary preferences via five, six or seven courses that accommodate most food-related issues, including, incredibly, the dreaded vegan.

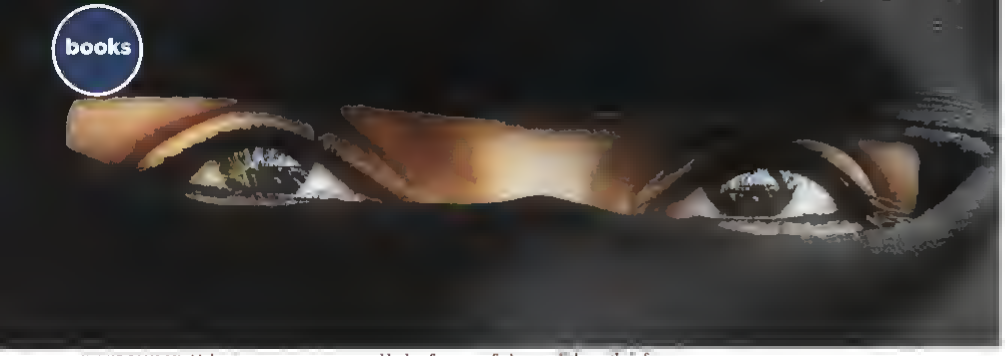
Of course, the idea does have its detractors. Alan Richman, the dean of food journalism at the French Culinary Institute in New York and author of *Fork It Over: The Intrepid Adventures of a Professional Eater*, says the customer-driven tasting menu falls into a category of which he thoroughly disapproves, namely, "Let's tell the chef how to cook." "I go to a restaurant to see what the chef has in mind and whether he's any good at it," he says. "If I want food cooked my way, I'll do it myself. And badly, too." Richman allows that the exception to the rule is if the chef comes out to your table, asks what you're interested in eating, and then you tell him to cook something he loves that isn't on the menu, or something he makes for himself at home. He believes that allergies not only can, but must be mentioned, and the same goes for religious prohibitions. But as for dislikes, "That's the grey area, because people who love to tell chefs what they don't like to eat inevitably slide into the 'pain-in-the-ass' category, where all they want to do is make the poor guy jump through hoops. I seldom feel sorry for chefs, but I will usually take their side against self-indulgent customers." M

PHOTOS BY CATHERINE DEAN



TODAY'S SPECIAL...SOBA NOODLES

Clunky, fat and a former low-brow staple of slurping men in diners, Japan's soba noodles have become rediscovered as a health-food by Japanese gourmets of both sexes. Naturally low in calories, soba contains protein, essential amino acids and rutin, a compound that lowers blood pressure. Says Hiromi Arai, an electrical engineer and part-time student at Tokyo's Tsukiji Soba Academy, "Soba is deep. The more you know, the more there is to know."



UNDER THE TALIBAN Afghan women were prevented by law from ever feeling sunlight on their faces

The war on terror is the real women's issue

Feminists whine about life in the West but they won't fight the bigger battle

BY MARK STEYN

What patriarchal dragons are left for feminists to slay? Well, according to Rachel Smolkin in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, "Women make up only 1 3 per cent of plumbers, pipe fitters and steamfitters "

Golly Maybe laying pipe is something that particularly appeals to boys, and maybe girls would rather be the hotshot lawyers who sue the contractor for not hiring enough female plumbers in America, after all, 60 per cent of college graduates are now women Both sets of statistics come from Kate O'Beirne's rollicking polemic *Women Who Make the World Worse*, and, whether or not you agree with the title, it's hard to argue that feminism hasn't won pretty much every battle in every sphere of modern Western life—not least the academy It's not just that 60 per cent of graduates are female but that the 40 per cent who aren't exist in a thoroughly feminized culture

Thus, every December 6, our own unmanned Dominion lowers its flags to half mast and tries to saddle Canadian manhood in general with the blame for the Montreal massacre—the 14 women murdered by Marc Lepine, born Gamil Gharbi, the son of an Algerian Muslim wife beater, though you wouldn't know that from the press coverage Yet the defining image of contemporary Canadian maleness is not M Lepine/Gharbi but the professors and the men in that classroom, who, ordered to leave by the lone gunman, meekly did so, and abandoned their female classmates to their fate—an act of abdication that would have been unthinkable in almost any other culture throughout human history The "men" stood outside in the corridor and, even as they heard the first shots, they did nothing And, when it was over and Gharbi walked out of the room and past them, they still did nothing Whatever its other defects, Canadian manhood does not suffer from an excess of testosterone

Your average Western feminist lobby group doesn't see it that way, naturally "The feminism I think of is the one that embodies inclusivity, multiculturalism and the ability to change the world through the humanity that women do bring," says Stephanie Davis, executive director of Atlanta's Women's Foundation "If there were women in power in representative numbers—52 per cent—I think that the World Trade Center would still be standing"

That's a familiar line. If only your average Security Council meeting looked like a college graduating class, or that room at the École Polytechnique after the men had departed, there would be peace on earth As an argument, it overlooks the fact that large parts of the world are already, in political terms, as thoroughly feminized as they can get. Robert Kagan's book, *Of Paradise And Power*, explicitly frames transatlantic relations as a gender relationship "Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus " And, though we live in the Martian part of town, Canada long ago had the hormone treatments and a couple of snips and crossed over to the Venusian side of the street

Anyone can beat up post-feminist neutered Western males. Why not pick on a target worth the effort?

Unfortunately, those societies that most enthusiastically aligned themselves with feminist priorities are also the ones that are—what's the word?—doomed If abortion is, as Kate O'Beirne calls it, feminism's "holy grail," there are more than a few countries that must wish they'd never stumbled upon it In the seventies, the average Russian woman apparently exercised her "right to choose" no less than seven times Today, abortions outnumber live births As a result, Russia is at the start of a demographic death spiral unprecedented in a relatively advanced society not at war While its womenfolk have a life expectancy comparable to their Canadian counterparts, the sickly Russian male expires in his 50s So far, in this first large-scale experiment on the dispensability of men, it appears that, in the broader societal sense, fish do indeed need bicycles.

That's a Gloria Steinem line, of course These days Gloria is—what? 83? 112?—and still looks fabulously hot, but, like *The Feminism of Doria Gray*, it's her ideology that's gotten all wrinkled and saggy In their peculiarly reductive definition of "women's issues," older Western feminists sound squaresville and younger ones sound kooky Just before the 2004 U S elections, Cameron Diaz appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show to explain what was at stake

"Women have so much to lose. I mean, we could lose the right to our bodies If you think that rape should be legal, then don't vote But if you think that you have a right to your body," she advised Oprah's viewers, "then you should vote"

The question is not whether Cameron's lost all rights to her body, but whether she's lost her mind. After presenting the 2004 Presidential election as a referendum on the right to rape, Miss Diaz might be interested to know that men enjoy that right under Islamic legal codes around the world—and, given that more countries live under Sharia than did 50 years ago, that means more women have "lost the right to their bodies". Under the Taliban, women were prevented by law from ever feeling sunlight on their faces Following the country's liberation by right wing patriarchs like Bush and Blair, there are now, as Linda Frum noted here the other week, more females in electoral politics in Afghanistan than in Canada

In other words, isn't the war on terror the real "women's issue"? As Ahmad al-Baqer, an MP from one of the more progressive Muslim nations (Kuwait), breezily put it, nixing a proposal to give broads the right to vote, "God said in the holy Koran that men are better than women Why can't we settle for that?" Why indeed? From the Associated Press

"Multan, Pakistan—Nazir Ahmed appears calm and unrepentant as he recounts how he slit the throats of his three young daughters and their 25-year-old stepsister to salvage his family's 'honor' . "

'God said in the holy Koran that men are better than women,' said a Kuwaiti MP. 'Why can't we settle for that?'

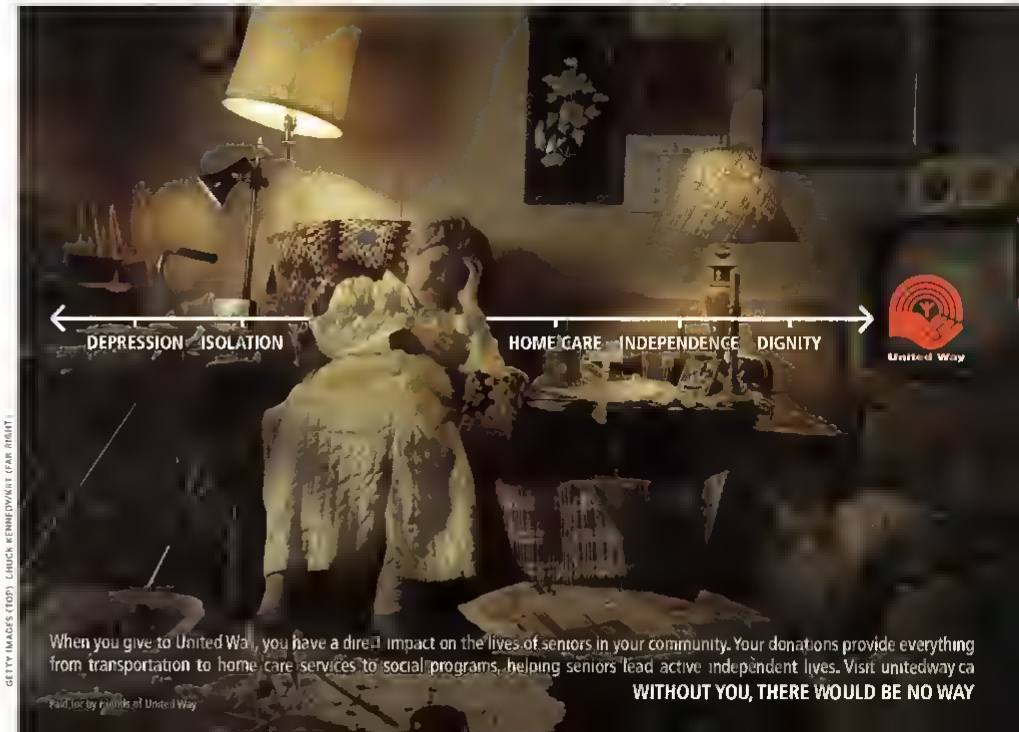
Alas for Mr Ahmed's daughters, that's all a long way away for Susan Sarandon, Gloria Steinem and the other sisters whose contribution to the liberation of Afghanistan was to oppose it But the "honour killings" are getting closer In London last summer, the police announced they were re-opening investigations into 120 deaths among British Muslim girls that they'd hitherto declined to look at too closely on grounds of "cultural sensitivity." There's a small flurry—enough almost to form a new category for the Governor-General's Awards—in books itemizing the violence to women, gay men and other approved groups in the new EUtopia• Claire Berlinski's *Menace In Europe* and Bruce Bawer's *While Europe Slept* are a staggering accumulation of riveting vignettes, like the non-Muslim girls in *les banlieues* of France opting to wear veils and other Islamic coverings to lessen the likelihood of being abused and assaulted in the streets

Which issue will impact more women's lives? The lack of female pipefitters? Or the combination of factors at play in those French—and Belgian, and Scandinavian, and maybe even Canadian—suburbs? Yet Western feminists sing the ancient songs of long won revolutions as relentlessly as drunks on St Patrick's Day "Have fewer children, later in life," advises Joan Peters. That's the strategy that demographically's delivering western Europe into the hands of a culture far more patriarchal than a 1950s sitcom dad.

"Keep your Bush off my bush!" chanted the ladies on Washington's Mall a year ago at the Million-Abortionist March or whatever it was called If any of those women still exercise their "reproductive rights", they might want to ponder the likelihood of any girl born today being able to prance around demonstrations in the Eurabian Paris or Brussels of 2030 or 2040 yelling "Hands off my bush!" C'mon, gals! Anyone can beat up post-feminist neutered Western males Why not pick on a target worth the effort? M



A EURABIAN PARIS would squash pro-choicers



GETTY IMAGES (TOP); CHUCK KENNEDY/KRT (FAR RIGHT)



JOHN FRENCH S FAMILY once owned dozens of slaves, in 1980, he paid $1 1 million for this apartment

Darling I love you, but give me Park Avenue

The homes of New York's ultra-rich trace the history of American capitalism

BY BRIAN BETHUNE • For 200 years, the richest of America's rich have called New York City home. Through most of that time, wealthy New Yorkers have been on the move, and always in the same direction: up. From its colonial enclave at the southern tip of Manhattan, the social elite meandered up island, neighbourhood by neighbourhood. By 1850, they reached Washington Square, explored by Henry James in his novel of the same name. They didn't stay there long, either, as Michael Gross points out in *740 Park: The Story of the World's Richest Apartment Building* (Random House), his enthralling mix of social history, real estate porn and *schadenfreude*.

After the Civil War, the super-wealthy first marched up Fifth Avenue, where each *nouveau riche* mansion offered an homage to excess and to new sources of wealth—railroad money, oil money, car money. And then, after they ran out of cheap land on their crowded island, the very rich (and everyone else who could afford it) went literally up, into the tall buildings that form Manhattan's distinctive skyline. By 1929, according to one historian, in a housing situation unique in the English-speaking world, "98 per cent of respectable New Yorkers" lived in apartments. A tiny fraction of them, then and now, were ensconced in "the sort of apartment the mere thought of which," according to Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, "ignites flames of greed and covetousness under people all over New York, and for that matter, all over the world." Consider the sort of *pied-à-terre* one can purchase at 740 Park Ave. for US$30 million or so, as one buyer did in 2000: 37 rooms over two floors that include 14 bathrooms, six servant bedrooms, three master bedrooms, a study, a gym and a library. All that and location, location, location.

What made the historic switch from mansion to skyscraper acceptable to upper-crust New York was co-operative ownership. The first Manhattan co-op rose in 1880, owned and occupied by a socialist artists' colony. But capitalists soon grasped that the method could be used to ensure that only social equals would live cheek by jowl in high-end buildings. Instead of owning a particular unit outright, residents own a share of the entire building. While they have exclusive occupancy of their own apartments, residents can sell their shares (and apartments) only to buyers approved by the other owners, as represented by the co-op's board of directors. The ability to control just who is allowed in adds considerable spice to Gross's account of poor little rich folks whose money couldn't quite buy happiness.

Jacqueline Bouvier and Campbell's Soup heiress Elinor Dorrance played tennis in the empty units

Many co-op boards used their power to block the entry of new money types (until time provided an old-money polish) and ethnic undesirables—i.e. Jews (until recently), African Americans weren't even on the radar). But that wasn't the case at 740 Park, where the tone was set by resident John D. Rockefeller Jr., who frowned on discrimination, at least after his son Nelson began considering a run for governor in 1957. At 740, the board reserved its blackballing for déclassé occupations—rejecting actress Elizabeth Taylor and singer Barbra Streisand.

The last great building to go up in New York's wealthy Upper East Side, 740 Park was finished in 1930—bad timing, financially speaking, on the part of builder James Lee, grandfather of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis. The building teetered on the edge of bankruptcy when many apartments stood empty in the early Depression. Campbell's Soup heiress Elinor Dorrance later recalled playing tennis in them with the Bouvier sisters, not to mention roller skating over their marble floors, before enraged superintendents complained to the girls' parents. But Rockefeller's arrival saved the day for Lee, and since then, 740 Park has been home to an ever-evolving roster of old-money names (Vanderbilt, Chrysler) and thrusting newcomers like leveraged-buyout king Henry Kravis.

The building gives the *nouveaux riches* the two things they crave most: luxury and, by grace of being accepted by 740's picky board, the mark of social arrival. Gilt by association, Gross calls it. (Political influence, as always, accompanied the economic muscle. In August 1945, resident Landon Thorne had his brother-in-law Henry Stimson over for dinner. Stimson, President Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of war, announced that the world would change the next day. And so it did, when the first atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima.)

Through the decades the building and its inhabitants have continually been newsworthy in a city where real estate envy is almost a civic religion. Famed hostess Peggy Bedford Bancroft made the papers for spectacular parties in the 1950s, including one in which an elephant damaged the elevator. Years later, after Bancroft's daughter was turned down by another co-op board, her father opined: "They probably felt you'd park a camel in the lobby."

After Edgar Bronfman, scion of Canada's richest Jewish family, overcame resistance to his entry in 1960 (based not on his religion but the fact he was, in the mocking words of Elinor Dorrance's daughter, "a *bikker* salesman"), his life took a tabloid turn. His first wife left him for a woman, his second marriage was annulled, and his son Sam was kidnapped. Sam was recovered, but during the trial one of the accused testified he and Sam had been gay lovers and cooked up the scheme to extort money from Edgar. All in all, it's hardly surprising that, as Edgar Bronfman's secretary told Gross, recalling his time at 740 "isn't really something [her boss] wants to do." M

ON THE WEB Read an excerpt from *740 Park*, *www.macleans.ca/740park*



FINALLY A BOOK ABOUT...THE REAL KABBALAH

Madonna's variety, according to the exceedingly polite and erudite Joseph Dan, author of *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP) is still too new to discuss. Instead Dan, Professor of Kabbalah at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, offers a witty and accessible history of what remains a core element in Jewish religious thought. He makes it clear it's not Kabbalah's fault if some have misapplied its name to a New Age ragbag of alchemy, astrology and magic.

COURTESY JOHN H. FRENCH III (TOP)

MACLEAN'S

BESTSELLERS

COMPILED BY BRIAN BETHUNE

	Fiction	LAST WEEK (WEEKS ON LIST)
1.	THE PENELOPIAD by Margaret Atwood	1 (9)
2.	THE LIGHTHOUSE by P.D. James	2 (8)
3.	THE DA VINCI CODE by Dan Brown	4 (125)
4.	THE TIME IN BETWEEN by David Bergen	3 (7)
5.	A BREATH OF SNOW AND ASHES by Diana Gabaldon	5 (12)
6.	A PERFECT NIGHT TO GO TO CHINA by David Gilmour	7 (5)
7.	KNIFE OF DREAMS by Robert Jordan	6 (9)
8.	THE SEA by John Banville	8 (7)
9.	A MAP OF GLASS by Jane Urquhart	(1)
10.	ARTHUR & GEORGE by Julian Barnes	9 (4)

	Non-fiction	
1.	TALK TO THE HAND by Lynne Truss	1 (6)
2.	FREAKONOMICS by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner	3 (26)
3.	THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING by Joan Didion	4 (10)
4.	TEACHER MAN by Frank McCourt	5 (4)
5.	THE BEDSIDE BOOK OF BIRDS by Graeme Gibson	2 (7)
6.	POSTWAR by Tony Judt	(1)
7.	THE GREAT WAR FOR CIVILIZATION by Robert Fisk	6 (4)
8.	A LITTLE HISTORY OF THE WORLD by E. H. Gombrich	(1)
9.	THE CITY OF FALLING ANGELS by John Berendt	10 (4)
10.	THE LOST PAINTING by Jonathan Harr	9 (2)

Swing a thong of celebration



SCOTT FESCHUK

Reaction to the decision by the Supreme Court of Canada to legalize swingers clubs continues to resound across the land and especially in homes where wives refuse to believe their husbands were totally kidding in a completely humorous way when, upon hearing the news, they may or may not have too eagerly said, "Um, so you want to give it a go?" (Come on, honey, it's called a *joke*.)

Religious groups have assailed the ruling as offensive to our national sense of decency. Civil rights advocates have hailed the loosening of restrictions on what people choose to do in private. And the editors of *Penthouse Forum* have put on an extra shift to handle the expected influx of correspondence. For people who aspire to do it with plenty of people in places where plenty of people have done it before with plenty of the people who've done doing it before, Canada has just become Fantasy Island, but without all the bell ringing and tedious sermonizing. (One news story put it this way: "Swingers across Canada cheered the ruling"—thus creating the mental image of scantily clad persons from coast to coast taking time out of accessing the trousers of others to raise their thongs in joyful celebration.)

The court's seven to two ruling—I think it's safe to guess which two judges didn't stick around in chambers for the post-ruling "after-party," if you catch my drift—was released just days before Christmas, lifting the threat of legal sanction from the annual Festivus Festive Orgy and Bake Off, which was nice and really helped with my performance. Wait, that sounds dirty. I'm talking about my rum balls here. Wait, that sounds dirty.

What I'm trying to say is that by all accounts the Supreme Court hearing that led to the decision was noteworthy for its robust debate about public morality and the role of the state in the private affairs of men and women. Also, for the way that everyone giggled constantly. And how whenever anybody said the word "copulate," the judges nudged and high-fived each other so hard that their powdered wigs fell off.

Okay, I made up that last part. The judges were all business. Consenting adults who choose to engage in amorous-type activities with multiple partners in view of like-minded people are not committing indecent acts, they decided—although the judges would go on to unanimously agree that these consenting adults were quite likely to wind up being "sore." Meanwhile, what's of particular interest to legal scholars is the fact that courts continue to give "consenting adults" the freedom to do more and more things in modern society, despite convincing evidence that consenting adults were responsible for the production of the last two *Matrix* movies, and therefore probably ought to be under state supervision when doing anything more challenging than combing their hair.

In legal terms, what the Supreme Court concluded is that community standards aren't really the issue here. For an act to be deemed illegal, there must be demonstrable harm done to "the proper functioning of Canadian society." Group "encounters" behind locked doors don't meet this standard, the seven judges said. All in all, bad news for opponents of swingers clubs—but heartening encouragement for those of us keen to bring Céline Dion to justice for her last three records.

Across the country, fallout from the ruling has been swift and sweeping. Business at swingers clubs is brisk (at least, that's what I'm told by people who've been there who aren't in any way me, honey). The multi billion-dollar facial hair removal industry is gripped by panic as millions of Canadian males ponder growing unkempt, orgy-calibre moustaches. And there's been a marked increase in the number of Americans arriving at our border and insisting they're coming north for "uhh... the snowmobiling. Yeah, that's it, the snowmobiling or whatever."

Whenever anybody said the word 'copulate,' the judges high-fived each other so hard their powdered wigs fell off

Indeed, Jean Hamel, a person described as a swinger spokesperson, told one newspaper that two-thirds of the clientele at Montreal's swap clubs are now from out of town. This fact isn't all that interesting, but I just couldn't resist writing the words "swinger spokesperson." Do you think it says that on Jean's business card? Because that would be awesome.

Now, before I go off and file my expenses for this column (question: does menage a trois take an accent?), a final word. Look at the photograph atop this column. What does it say to you? I'll tell you what it says. It says "swinger." It says. This is a man who "swings." And by "swings" I mean "does that thing that swinging means." By whith what I'm trying to say is: we're talking about sex here, right? We are? Good. I was pretty sure we were. M

Scott Feschuk can be reached at sfeschuk@sympatico.ca



STEPHEN SCHNEIDER ISN'T ANTI-DOCTOR. But he's convinced his persistence is a huge factor in his being alive

Are you absolutely sure about that, doctor?

A cancer survivor advises patients not to be passive about their care

BY JULIA McSINNELL • To say that Stephen Schneider is smart and well connected is an understatement. Schneider has a doctorate in plasma physics and is a professor of biological science at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. When Schneider found a lump the size of a BB on his upper right arm, he knew immediately who to call: his friend and internist Dr. Michael Jacobs at Stanford University Medical Center. After a biopsy, the diagnosis came back as a type of rare and aggressive non Hodgkin's B-cell lymphoma known as mantle cell. Jacobs made a call and within a week arranged for Schneider to see another Stanford associate, Dr. Sandra Horning, an oncologist considered to be the leading expert in mantle cell lymphoma. The average Joe should be so lucky. As of this month, Schneider's cancer is in its fourth year of remission. He is teaching and writing again. In fact, he's just published a book, *The Patient from Hell*, an emotional account of the pain and fear he felt while he was ill, and the life-saving treatment he says he often had to fight for and sometimes deceive his doctors to get.

Schneider is not "anti-doctor," he says. Yet he's convinced that his persistence is a huge factor in his being alive. "Most physicians—and patients—act as if the patient's role is simply to take orders and be co operative."

When he started asking questions, "it was at first difficult to be taken seriously." Early on, wondering why he didn't need further blood tests he was told, "It's just how it's done. Don't worry." Sneaking behind the doctor's back, he tricked a nurse by saying, "Excuse me, I was told to get a blood test on August 17." "Of course," she said, and entered it into the computer. Another time, he was sent to a surgeon for a biopsy. Wait a minute, he thought, and asked the doctor: "Why do I need surgery? Can't we just stick a needle into my lump and do the biopsy that way?" "I'm a surgeon. I don't do that kind of thing," said the doctor. "But I agree with your point." The surgery was cancelled. "I wondered why I even had to ask," Schneider writes.

Research is essential. If Schneider had listened to his oncologist who told him, "Don't read the Web, it'll depress you," he wouldn't have unearthed key information he used to demand changes. His doctor wanted to protect him from the huge amount of online data that can be discouragingly out of date. Schneider writes, "The good news is ... your prognosis may be better than the Web would lead you to believe." On the other hand, "even if your doctor is diligent, there is so much new information being released ... it is possible—even likely—that your doctor just hasn't gotten word of a specific study. Therefore, if you come across something interesting on the Web, gather as much information as you can and bring it to your next appointment."

'Don't read the Web,' he was told. 'It'll depress you.' But Schneider found key information there.

He suggests drawing up a list of questions, and attending appointments with a friend or family member. Also, patients should not be afraid to voice concerns. In Schneider's case, because of a pre-existing heart condition, he asked whether he should receive Coumadin, an anticoagulant to reduce stroke risk. The intern disagreed, saying that the probability of stroke is less than five per cent. "If there were a five per cent chance that there was salmonella in your chicken tonight, would you eat it?" he asked. "Well, of course not," was the reply. Schneider got the Coumadin.

The good news for the little guy, in Canada anyway, is that most major hospitals have a full-time patient representative who will listen to concerns. Sharon Rogers is the director of patient relations for Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto General, and Toronto Western Hospital. Rogers says that if "communication is not as good as it should be," it's "entirely appropriate" for the patient to ask questions, particularly if "they don't understand why X is not possible." She admits, however, it's more difficult when a patient says, "I read it on the Internet" and the "cure" in question is "shark cartilage or high colonics." In Canada, doctors will individualize treatment only where there is "a body of knowledge, clinical trials, and [it is] proven by scientific evidence," says Rogers. Likely, the patient will hear, "That's not something we have confidence in." Schneider ran into the same problem of "lack of scientific evidence" for a procedure he wanted, but managed to persuade his doctor to let him be "the experiment."

"Don't take a fatalistic approach when dealing with your diagnosis" is the ultimate message of Schneider's book. "Becoming a 'patient from hell' may well delay your trip to the next world." M



MOST IMPROVED... ALEX KOVALEV

Just another temperamental Russian before the NHL lockout, Montreal Canadiens forward Alex Kovalev is becoming the soul of the franchise. In a triumphant return from knee surgery on Dec. 20, he scored the tying goal, the shootout winner and assisted both of Montreal's other markers in a 4-3 win over the Ottawa Senators. Not long ago booed by New York fans for lacklustre performance as a Ranger, now he blows kisses to the Bell Centre faithful

CORBIS



Foldable bikes, Craig T. Nelson and a travel blog in our compendium of things that make life worth living

THIN LINE BETWEEN GEEK AND GENIUS Seth, the prolific Guelph-based graphic novelist, explores the closed and *outré* world of collecting in *Wimbledon Green*. His hero? An obsessive and rotund genius—"The greatest comic book collector in the world."

CRAZY FOR COACH Craig T. Nelson should be in every movie. But for now we'll settle for seeing him as the gentle-giant father in *The Family Stone*.

CHILD LABOUR Babies are cute, but they don't help much around the house. Thanks to *Baby Mix Me a Drink* and *Baby Make Me Breakfast*, two clever picture books (from the sassy publishers at McSweeney's), your offspring might just learn something useful.



EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT SNL? *Lazy Sunday*, a rap video—in which *Saturday Night Live* comedians Chris Parnell and Andy Samberg eat cupcakes and make their way to a screening of the "Chronic WHA?-cles of Narnia"—has already spawned T-shirts and a frenzy of Web activity. Try and watch it just once: *www.youtube.com/watch.php?v=zLEIfJ9YCho*

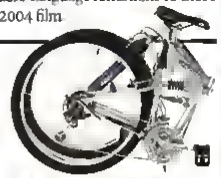
INSPECTED BY NICKELBACK Treana Peake (wife of Nickelback guitarist Ryan) founded Vancouver's Obakki Designs. The jackets and skirts in the recent collection are stunning. (*www.obakki.com*)

FEAR AND LOATHING SCOOTER-STYLE Felled by a car-on-scooter accident in Vancouver, Modern Gonzo (a k a Robin Esrock) settled out of court, and used the earnings for a 12-month journey spanning 110,000 km and five continents. Check out his in depth travelogue at *www.moderngonzo.com*



GROUND CONTROL TO MAJOR JORGE

David Bowie's glam anthems are at once more earthy and ethereal on the lips of Brazilian singer/actor Seu Jorge, whose *The Life Aquatic Studio Sessions* adds more Portuguese-language renditions to those already heard in Wes Anderson's 2004 film.



IT'LL GIVE YOU CHILLS Montreal indie band Stars makes dreamy music—made all the better by a sigh-inducing video of them singing and playing instruments while lying on a frozen ice skating pond, for their single *Your Ex-Lover Is Dead*.

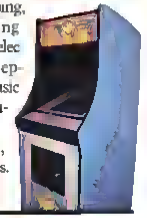


KNDW WHEN TO FOLD 'EM Collapsible bikes, by Vancouver's Bazooka Sports, fit behind your desk, in your car trunk, even in your suitcase. They're also popular with the port-to-port yacht crowd. (*www.bazookasports.com*)



EYE PATCH NOT INCLUDED Teaching your kids about current events—like the recent spate of pirate attacks—will be fun for all with the Buccaneer Fort and Barbarossa Ship, from Canada's Mastermind Toys.

JOYSTICK JUKEBOX Remember video arcades—those dimly lit teen-boy haunts of the '80s? The recordings on *www.comopvideogames.com* are from arcades across the U.S. Listen to coins dropping, pinballs pinging and the electronic bleep-and-blip music that accompanied all your faves, including Ms. Pac-Man.



PRETEND TO BE A READER Pass off your iPod as a low tech, long forgotten pulp fiction title, like *Hotel Fever* or *Detective Fiction Weekly*, in a campy carrying case designed by Canadian Jenifer Forrest, who guts the books' insides, save for the library card, to make way for a protective iPod slip (*store.virginthreads.com/ipod_cases.html*).

BACKPACK—CHECK. BRIEFCASE—CHECK. Mountain Equipment Co-op's thermo-moulded, hybrid briefcase/backpack is waterproof and beefy, with the obligatory iPod pocket—perfect for those days when you feel like fitting in a hike before heading to the office.



THE END

JULIO IGLESIAS PUGA

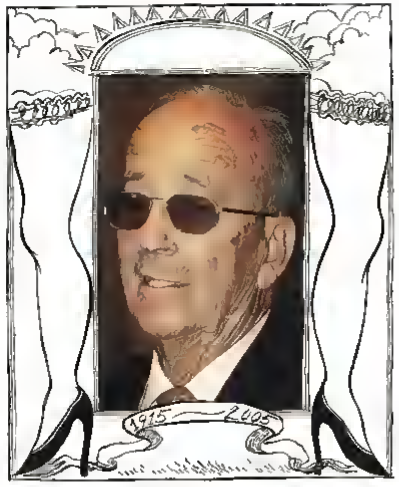
1915-2005

He taught his famous son how to be a playboy—his young wife is expecting again

Julio Iglesias Puga was born on July 26, 1915, in Ourense, part of the ancient kingdom of Galicia in the northwest of Spain. He was the fifth of seven children born into a middle-class family. Their father, a military man, pushed Julio to study medicine, and he became one of the youngest gynecologists to work in Spain's public health system. Julio's research in managing pain during childbirth brought him recognition, and he eventually co-founded the Madrid maternity clinic. There, he became head doctor, specializing in infertility, sterility and family planning.

During the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, Julio was captured by the communist Republicans for supporting General Franco's Nationalists and the Falange party. He was imprisoned in six jails, and escaped repeated threats of execution.

A few years after the war, Julio met Rosario de la Cueva at the Carnaval de Carabanchel Bajo dance. They married, and in 1943 Rosario gave birth to their first child by Caesarean section, which Julio performed. They named their son Julio, and two years later had another son, Carlos. They lived well in Ourense. Julio was one of the first men there to own a Mercedes Benz. But over the years his relationship with Rosario grew distant and cold. When Julio confessed to her that he had been unfaithful since their third year of marriage, she refused to forgive him. They divorced in 1983.



With his bachelor status restored, Julio did nothing to contain his love of women. He boasted that, despite the many women at his side, he could no longer be considered an adulterer. When he was 60, Julio began a relationship with a 22-year-old woman. Nearly 11 years later, she wanted marriage and children. Julio wanted neither, and they broke up.

Throughout Spain, Julio developed his own celebrity and became known as *Papuchi*, which means "little Daddy," to fans of his fun and youthful lifestyle. Meanwhile, son Julio became a superstar famous for romantic love songs and an insatiable libido. His own marriage ended after the birth of two sons (one is pop star Enrique) and a daughter. As Julio's celebrity soared in the early 1980s, his father enjoyed the attention paid to him by the press, and he regularly joked with staked-out journalists looking for gossip about his son.

On Dec. 29, 1981, two men of the Basque separatist guerrilla organization posed as German television reporters outside Julio Sr.'s medical clinic, coaxing him into their car for an interview. When Julio agreed, the kidnappers sped him to Trasmoz, near the eastern city of Zaragoz. For 19 days they held him in a tiny, unlit room, and he waited to be killed. His son Julio paid millions in ransom money before the Spanish police rescued him and arrested four captors.

The famous singer recalled in 1982 that after the abduction, "My brilliant father had lost his ability to think. He was frightened, confused. He cried 10 hours a day. He lived in fear." With time and the company of security guards, Julio overcame what he called one of the darkest moments of his life.

The worst had come when son Julio nearly died as a teenager. A car accident left him unable to walk for nearly two years. It was during that time that the two struck a deal that once Julio Jr. finished his law degree, he could enter the 10th annual Spanish Song Festival. Julio won, and had his father's blessing to become a professional singer.

In August 1990, while Julio Sr. sat on the terrace of a cafe in Havana, two American women walked by. One was Ronna Keith, a beautiful Floridian model in her 20s, whom he invited to join him. She obliged, and they began a love affair. They married in March 2001, though Julio refused to speak publicly about their relationship until the following year, once Rosario had died.

Soon after, Julio became the subject of Spanish gossip when he and Ronna had their first son, James Nathaniel, in May 2004. Julio was 88. That same year, writers at the tabloid *¡Hola!* released *Iron Will*, Julio's authorized biography.

So it was fitting that in early December Julio announced in that magazine exclusively that he and Ronna were expecting their second child this spring. "To have a son at my age is a gift, a privilege," he said.

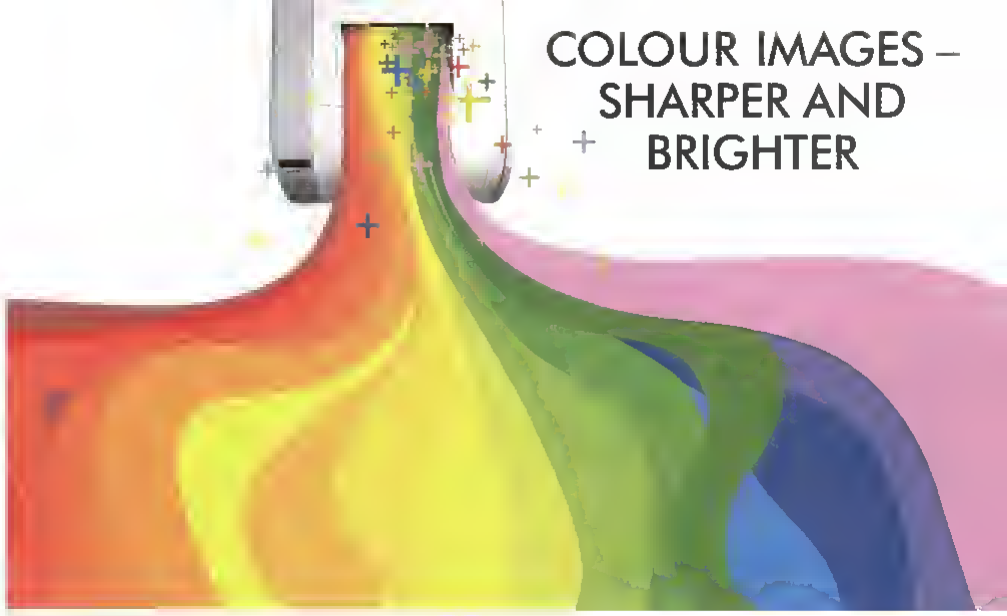
Days later, Julio was alone in Spain. Ronna had travelled to the U.S. to prepare for the new baby. He wasn't feeling well, and skipped that evening's mass. The next morning, he had one of his staff call for an ambulance. His family was notified, and according to one source, Julio called his first-born son to tell him this would be the last time they spoke.

On Dec. 19, 2005, Julio Iglesias Puga, 90, died of heart failure in Hospital Clinico San Carlos in Madrid.

BY CATHY GULLI

ILLUSTRATION BY TED MCGRATH

COLOUR IMAGES – SHARPER AND BRIGHTER



With HP spherical toner particles

When it's time to use colour in your documents, you want the best. That's why we continue to advance colour printing for HP LaserJet printers.

HP colour LaserJet toner is chemically grown to be spherically uniform in size and shape, unlike conventional colour toners, which are pulverized and can produce less than optimal images. With HP spherical toner, you get outstanding colour images – sharper and brighter.



Original HP Supplies
The science behind brilliant printing.



Create brilliant images with original HP colour LaserJet print cartridges!

Visit **www.hp.ca/scienceofprinting**

hp invent

© 2006 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice.

© 2007 BMW Canada Inc. "BMW", the BMW logo and all BMW model designations are registered trademarks of BMW AG, used under license.

xDrive
All-Wheel Drive
3 Series

To learn more visit
BMWxDrive.ca

The Ultimate
Driving Experience.



xDrive® All-Wheel Drive

MAXIMUM TRACTION | MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE



The weather doesn't have to be perfect to discover the perfect corner. Only xDrive marries legendary BMW handling with advanced All-Wheel Drive traction and control. Now available on 11 different BMW models, including the new 3 Series Sedan and Touring.